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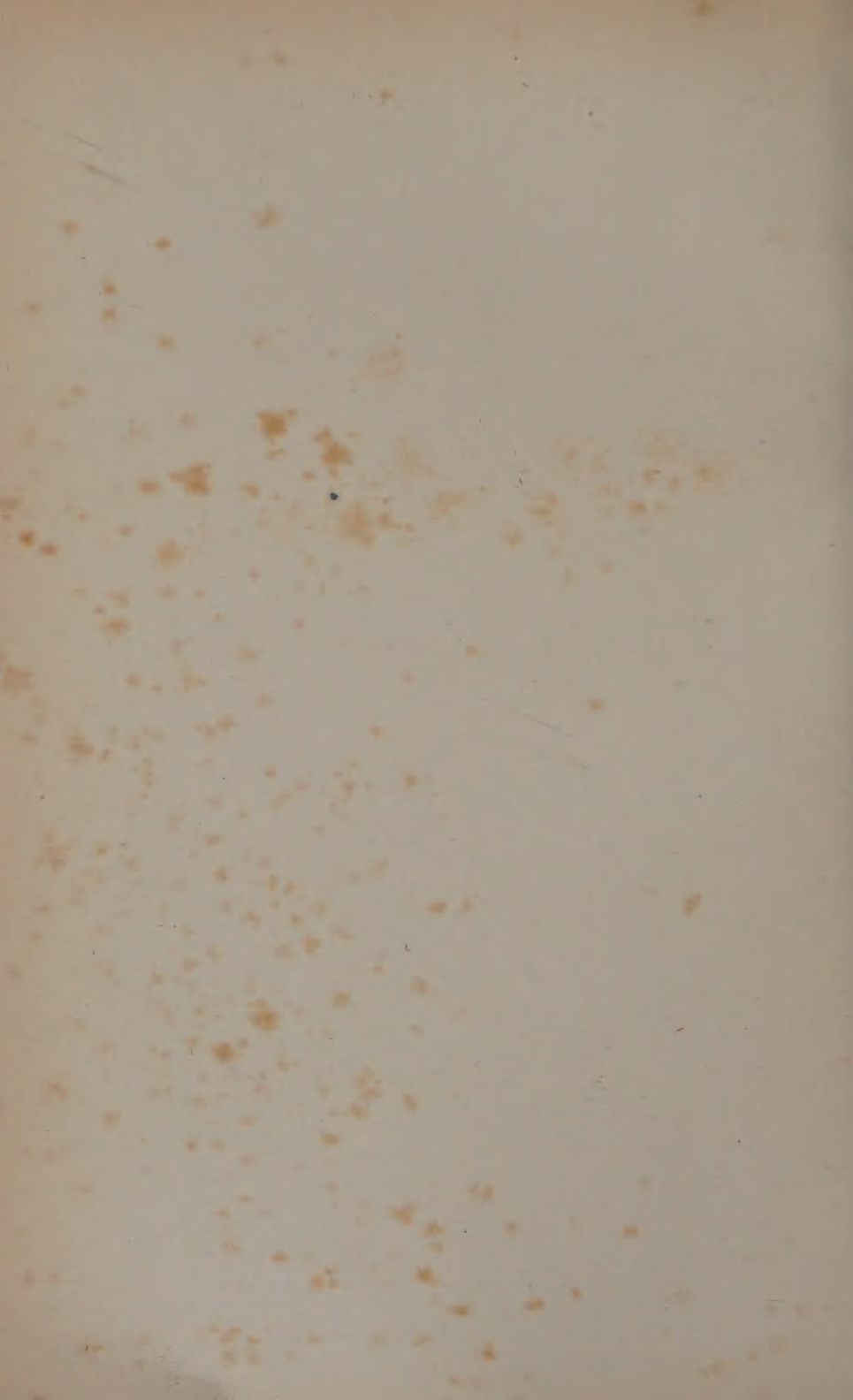
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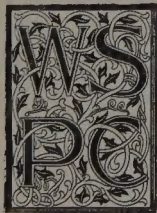


Yours sincerely  
Bessie Palmer

# MUSICAL RECOLLECTIONS

BESSIE PALMER

*WITH PORTRAITS, ETC.*



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# MY MUSICAL RECOLLECTIONS.



## CHAPTER I.

AN autobiography may often seem to most readers an egotistical effusion, especially when commencing with the early years of the writer, and telling the many simple incidents happening during his or her childhood and youth. Yet they should be interesting, because the earliest events in a child's life often prove the natural passionate love for Art, which shows itself even under difficult circumstances, and in different ways. My hope is that the history of my childhood, indeed of all my life, may be told in a plain, unvarnished way, so that the reader may not be wearied or disgusted, but may take a kindly, genial interest in the simple relation of facts happening during many years past.

I was born on 9th August 1831, at 9 Fountain

Court, Strand, and it is curious how that number "9" has mixed with the successes of my life, as will be seen later on. I was the eldest of five children—two girls and three boys—which accounts in a measure for my looking much older when about seventeen than I was. My mother was far from strong, consequently I had much to do with the household affairs; but this did not prevent me from indulging in my great love for music, and drawing too, which is even now (1904) as strong as ever. When only three years old I used to be lifted on the table to show off my tiny voice in baby-songs—"My little Blue-bell, my pretty Blue-bell" being one of which the memory still clings to me.

My first "instrument" was an iron tea-tray. Long before I could speak plainly I found that pleasant sounds could be brought from one of these old-fashioned articles by little blows with my childish fists on the (in those days) resonant large trays, made more for use than ornament. Whenever I heard any music I tried to reproduce it on my dear musical iron-tray, and this soon led to my father, a short time after, buying an old square piano, so that I might try to get tunes out of that. And oh! the delight that filled my heart, as I grew older year by year (and the misery too), when playing on that, to me, wonderful



instrument! Friends of my mother, who came in and played on it, caused me more wretchedness than pleasure. In those days (*circa* 1836), people, unless educated as musicians, were very careless of the bass and harmonies of the melodies they liked to play, and this to me was most torturing, as I had an intuitive love of "proper bass and proper harmonies." Once, at a birthday-dance given for me, my mother came and asked why I was looking so unhappy and not dancing the "German Waltz," whereupon I gave a pathetic sob and exclaimed, "I *can't* dance while she plays like that!" The melody was in the key of G, while the bass was played in D!

My voice I inherited from my mother. When young she had a lovely contralto voice, and Tom Welsh, the well-known singing-master of those days, was most anxious that she should become his pupil, and declared she would make a great career; but my grandfather was horrified, and said he would rather see her in her coffin than on a public platform! So she sang only as Nature had taught her, with a rich and sympathetic voice. I used, when quite young, to sit at her feet constantly, listening till my sobs broke up the song—one especially, "A baby wander'd from its home," was full of pathos, and I used to beg for it every day, always winding up with a shower of tears.

## MY MUSICAL RECOLLECTIONS

*Andante sostenuto.*

Words by H. SIDDONS.

VOICE.

PIANO.

A ba - by wan-der'd from its home When

The first system of the musical score. The voice part is on a single staff with a treble clef, key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 6/8 time signature. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves: a right-hand staff with a treble clef and a left-hand staff with a bass clef, both sharing the 6/8 time signature and key signature. The piano part begins with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic marking. The lyrics 'A ba - by wan-der'd from its home When' are written below the voice staff.

day was gent - ly breaking, Long did the pret-ty

The second system of the musical score. The voice part continues on the same staff. The piano accompaniment continues on the same two staves. The lyrics 'day was gent - ly breaking, Long did the pret-ty' are written below the voice staff. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *cres.* (crescendo) and *dim.* (diminuendo).

in-fant roam Each simple wild flow'r seeking, Each

The third system of the musical score. The voice part continues on the same staff. The piano accompaniment continues on the same two staves. The lyrics 'in-fant roam Each simple wild flow'r seeking, Each' are written below the voice staff. The piano part includes a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic marking.

*cres.*

sim-ple wild flow'r seeking. But night came on, the

*cres.* *dim.* *cres.*

drea-ry sky, The wind so bleak, the leaves so dry,

*dim.* *pp*

*rit.*

Sung the poor baby's hushaby, Hushaby, Husha-by.

*pp* *rit.*

The frantic mother sought her child  
While the chill rain was falling ;  
Its lisping voice, its features mild,  
At every blast recalling :  
She wept, and with a heartfelt sigh,  
Fell on a green turf that was nigh,  
Hummed her poor baby's hushaby.

The baby near her slumb'ring 'woke,  
Like some sweet spring blossom ;  
Then through the spreading branches broke,  
And leaped upon her bosom :  
The mother gave a piercing cry,  
Wiped ev'ry rain-drenched garment dry,  
Hummed her poor baby's hushaby !

Up to the age of six I played everything by ear ; then my mother heard of a clever teacher of the piano, Mrs. Cutmore, a sweet woman, slightly deformed, poor thing ! She began by prohibiting any playing on the loved old piano until I had gone through the first part of Pinnock's *Catechism of Music*, teaching the names and places of notes on the staves, etc. Then I was taken to the piano again, with tears of joy in my eyes, to find out the notes on the keys, and to hold my hands and fingers properly. I can remember well the delight that filled my heart, as years went on, when I could take up pieces of music unknown to me and discover that I could bring out the melodies and lovely harmonies—just like reading a book ; and

very soon I found that I could read music mentally, and hear it mentally, which power I have always preserved, it being an immense pleasure (when without a piano) to be able to enjoy and understand fresh music in this way.

My father was passionately fond of music, and when my little hands were grown enough to take an octave, one of the first pieces he begged my music-mistress to teach me was an arrangement for the piano of Carl Maria von Weber's overture to *Der Freischütz*. Connected as he became with members of the Press through being a printer, he had many opportunities of taking my mother to the Opera; and I remember my first visit there was when nine years old—*Don Giovanni* the opera, Grisi, Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache the four principal singers. From that date, 1840, I used often to go, for my love of music was so strongly developed that my memory was constantly at work reproducing the lovely melodies of Mozart, etc. Oddly enough, I did not "take" to Rubini—cannot remember his singing; but Grisi, Tamburini, and Lablache made a great impression on me. It was in 1840 that Bernhard Molique made his first appearance in England, at one of the Philharmonic Concerts. Later in life I was fortunate enough to know this most estimable man and fine violinist, also his wife and daughters,



Caroline, Louise, Anna (the well-known pianiste), and Clara. Even now I have the great pleasure of occasionally seeing those still living.

I remember when between four and five years old being taken to the Victoria Theatre. Mrs. Honey played a sailor-boy, and by some accident cut her forehead, but bravely continued to play the part with a bandage round her head. I can see her distinctly in my memory now, though what the play was I have not the slightest idea. I must have been very small, for I remember how dark it seemed to me when I was standing by my mother's knees in the private box, and could only see the stage when seated on her lap.

The house, 9 Fountain Court, Strand, where I was born, which looked from the back on the remains of the old Savoy Palace, we shared with a widowed sister of my mother, Aunt Answorth, and their mother: such a pretty old dear, with sweet little flat curls, quite black, though very old, on her forehead, and always dressed in black soft material, with a fine white muslin kerchief folded over her chest and shoulders, in the quaint style of George III.'s time. As my parents' family increased, they found it necessary to remove into a larger house, so then we went to Hatfield Street, Stamford Street. I remember yet what interesting stories Aunt Answorth told about the Savoy

Palace. What remained of a part used in former days as a hospital had been turned into barracks, afterwards used as a prison for deserters; and when the war between England and France broke out a second time in 1803, prisoners of war



"LE TEMPS N'Y LA MORT NE METTERONT POINT DE BORNES À MA FIDELITÉ."

were confined there. I have a very interesting little relic of the war, given me by my aunt. It is a small piece of tissue paper cut into delicate tracery, with an imperial crown shown at the top; a tiny picture in the centre of a tomb with two

hour-glasses and a heart with flames rising from it, placed on it; by the side of the tomb a little dog, in front of it a skull, and round the base an inscription (very faint), "Le temps n'y la mort ne metteront point de bornes à ma Fidelité." My aunt also gave me a pretty tiny basket, carved out of a plum-stone. Both these she told me she had bought of two poor French prisoners of war confined in the Savoy, for it seems they were all thankful to make a little money, poor fellows! I give a photograph of the unique tracery picture, though the inscription is now quite illegible, it is so faded.

In later years I often went to the Savoy Chapel, having a great regard for the late Rev. Henry White, whose acquaintance I had made soon after my *début* in 1854, at St. Martin's Hall. Though he had a weak voice and a slight impediment in his pronunciation, his sermons were very interesting and "to the point"; he was, too, a most kind-hearted man, having a great friendliness for all connected with the musical and dramatic professions.

My father was for years with Messrs. Clowes, when their printing premises were in Duke Street, Stamford Street, and after leaving Fountain Court, for some years we lived in Hatfield Street, as it was conveniently near Clowes's for my father. He was deeply engaged with the *Dispatches of the*

*Duke of Wellington* when my first brother, Robert Edward, was born, and wrote the following letter at once to Aunt Answorth, as though the newly-arrived baby had done so:—

58 HATFIELD ST., *Nov. 4th*, 1837.

DEAR AUNT,—I beg to inform you that, last night, while Pa was gone to Lisson Grove after my nurse, I arrived as above, in a devil of a hurry about 20 m. to 11. Ma begs me to say she is quite well and very happy; and that Mrs. Robinson says I am as big as her boy who was born seven weeks ago. We are both “as well as can be expected”—and shall be glad to see you to-morrow, if you choose. Pa sends his love; and so do my sisters.—Your very affectionate nephew,

? PALMER, jun.

Colonel Gurwood, the Duke's aide-de-camp, used often to call at our house to read through the proofs of the Duke's letters, etc. One day my mother happened to be nursing her baby-boy when the Colonel was shown in; he asked her which it was, girl or boy? “My first boy,” said she, proudly. “Poor little devil!” murmured the Colonel. Were any of his own troubles floating through his brain at that moment, I wonder?—for the poor fellow put an end to his life not very many years afterwards, I remember being told. I

can see his face, seamed with gunpowder on one side.

At Clowes's my father was constantly meeting with great writers of that day: Sir Edward Lytton (as he was then called), Lord Mahon, Lord Carnarvon, Theodore Hook, J. S. Lockhart, Barry Procter, etc. In 1838 my father gave up his engagement (after eighteen years) with Messrs. Clowes & Sons, and started his own printing office in Crane Court, Fleet Street, in partnership with Mr. J. Clayton. One of the earliest things printed by him was *The Illustrated London News*. He received many very kind letters from some well-known writers about leaving Messrs. Clowes, a few of which I reproduce. The first is from J. S. Lockhart, Sir Walter Scott's son-in-law; the next from Colonel Gurwood, "the Duke's" aide-de-camp; one from R. Cannon (Horse Guards). Then follow one from Theodore Hook, the favourite writer of *Gilbert Gurney*, and one from John Washington, the editor of the Royal Geographical Society's Journal.

DEAR SIR,—Please attend to the slips of Heraldry now sent. I remodel mine by their aid. Leave the book I named at the head, as *second* to that given here; and try to make a neat job of the page with the cuts.



Alas—you will not have the care finally even of these sheets! I regret this most sincerely, for nobody can ever do my business more accurately and obligingly than you have always done it; and I fear I shall often miss the sensible queries I have been benefited by heretofore.

But I trust good fortune attends your prospects, and if I can also be of any use to you by bearing testimony to your prudence, skill, and diligence in the getting up of the Q.R.—command me entirely.

Believe me ever most sincerely yours, dear Mr. Palmer,

J. S. LOCKHART.

*June 2nd, 1838.*

APSLEY HOUSE, 13th June 1838, 7 P.M.

MY DEAR SIR,—I will not leave your note, which I have this moment received, without an immediate answer. Mr. Clowes explained to me the cause of your quitting him, and spoke to me in high terms of you.

I should have found out your address in a few days, had you not sent it to me, and when I am less pressed than at present, I will pay you a visit. I trust that you will succeed in your undertaking, in which if ever in my power I hope to assist you.—Sincerely yours,

Mr. Palmer.

J. GURWOOD.

[PRIVATE.]

HORSE GUARDS, 31st May 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of this morning, and am much concerned that there is so early an intention of your leaving the establishment of Mr. Clowes; but I hope that you will be successful in whatever you undertake in your line of business.

I shall be glad to see you if you should happen to come near the Horse Guards. I venture to send you herewith the *Introduction*, which I have prepared for the *Infantry* of my Historical Records, and which I should like to have printed in a neat type; but I fear that you will not be able to get it done for me by Saturday evening, although I confess I should wish it to be done by *yourself*, as it will make a regular beginning of the Infantry History, and nobody can finish this *better* than you can, or in whom I chuse (*sic*) to confide.—I remain, dear Sir, yours very truly,

RE. CANNON.

[PRIVATE.]

FULHAM, Tuesday.

DEAR SIR,—I have a great wish to surprize (*sic*) Mr. Colburn. I promised him he should have the Gurney Papers on Thursday, and he doubted their being done. I send them complete, and if, without mentioning to Mr. Hill or anybody that you have got them, you could get them done so as that I might get

a proof of them at Marlborough Street by two o'clock, Thursday, when I shall be there, I should like it very much. If you can play this trick for me without inconvenience, have the goodness to send the proof under cover to me, and marked *private*, so that if it should arrive before I do, nobody will open it till I come. If it is giving more trouble, of course don't mind it.—Yours faithfully,

T. E. H.

MY DEAR MR. PALMER,—I am very sorry to find, by your note of Friday, that you are about to leave Messrs. Clowes's establishment, after having been eighteen years together. Of course, knowing nothing of the reasons, I can offer no opinion on the subject; but both on public grounds and personally I regret it very much, as I can never hope to receive the same assistance, attention, and promptitude from a stranger that I have always experienced from you in printing the journal of the Geographical Society, and I cannot allow you to quit your present employment without thanking you for your good services in the hour of need. Among the many books that must have passed through your hands, you may fairly take the credit to yourself for the eight volumes of the *Geographical Journal*. I hope, too, that you must have made so many friends that should you be disposed to set up for yourself you

need not fear doing well; at all events, anything in my power is at your service, and I trust that you will not hesitate to mention it if I can be of use.—  
With my sincere best wishes, ever yours,

JOHN WASHINGTON.

R.G.S., *June 2*, 1838.

## CHAPTER II.

My father printed the *Illustrated London News* for Herbert Ingram when it first started, in 1842. I remember the first number very well. So much had been talked about the new paper that all connected with it made a great impression on me. I know my father was asked by Mr. Ingram and his brother-in-law, Nathaniel Cook, to go into partnership with them; but, unfortunately, my mother had such fear of the affair not proving a great success that she persuaded my father not to invest in it, but simply to undertake the printing. How often, long afterwards, I grieved that he had not joined them! Later on Mr. Ingram had a seat in Parliament, and years after was unfortunately drowned in a steamboat collision on Lake Michigan, America.

In 1842 we removed to Upper Kennington Lane, and soon after my father heard of a very clever teacher of the piano, Mrs. Richard Lloyd, with a most delightful touch and great facility. She was one of the sweetest women I ever knew, lovable and bright. Her husband had a good

baritone voice, and was singing in the Westminster Abbey Choir or the Temple, I believe. They lived very near to us, and when I was about fourteen my sister Mary was found to be suffering from consumption. As the poor girl speedily grew worse Mrs. Lloyd kindly asked me to go and practise at her house, in order not to worry the little sufferer with my constant practising. The first day I arrived there, while beginning to work very assiduously—for I found the piano so much better than my own (hers being a grand Broadwood, mine an upright Peachey cabinet)—the door was suddenly pushed open, and a pretty little boy, about four, rushed in, evidently wondering at the audacity of a girl daring to play on his mother's piano. This was Edward Lloyd, the now well-known tenor. Even then, tiny as the little fellow was, he had a sweet musical voice, and his fond mother coaxed him to sing to me. Ah! only the other day it seems, I was invited to his silver wedding celebration, August 1893.

I remember going to see Macready as King John, and also a performance under his management of Purcell's *King Arthur*. The part of that piece was the singing of "Come, if you dare" by an unknown singer *then*, but who a few years after was acknowledged as a great artist, and known all over the world in a short time as Mr. John Sims

Reeves. This was in 1842. In 1843 Reeves went to Paris to take lessons from Signor Bordogni. After a time there he moved on to Milan, by Bordogni's advice, took lessons from Mazzucato, director of the Milan Conservatorio, and soon appeared at La Scala, the great opera-house in Milan, as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Child as I was (only eleven), when I heard "John Reeves," as he was announced then, the wonderful quality of his voice struck me most intensely, and I was always trying to imitate the beautiful tones afterwards.

The same year, 1842, *Acis and Galatea* was produced under Macready's management, Acis being played by Priscilla Horton (whom I also saw as Ariel in *The Tempest*), Galatea by Emma Romer, not a great artist, but who acted fairly; Henry Phillips played Polyphemus, and Damon was well sung by Mr. Allen, though his voice was very small, yet sympathetic.

In 1841 I saw Adelaide Kemble as Norma—she looked remarkably handsome as the Druidess, and made a great success; Miss Rainforth playing Adalgisa. The next year Miss Rainforth appeared as Arline in the *Bohemian Girl*, by Michael Balfe, at Drury Lane Theatre; W. Harrison, Thaddeus; and Borroni as Arline's father. The last-named had appeared in 1838 at Her Majesty's Opera

House as the Count in *La Sonnambula*, under the name of Boisragon.

This same year Miss Dolby appeared first, at the Philharmonic Concert; but I did not hear her sing until about 1846, at Exeter Hall, in the *Messiah*. In 1844 Moriani, a very impassioned tenor with a sympathetic voice, came out at Her Majesty's Opera, but he was very uncertain, and often I heard him disappoint the audience. Mons. Duprez also came out then at Drury Lane for a few nights in *William Tell* and *La Favorita*, but I heard him only in the former, and was not at all interested by his voice, which was small, nor by his personal appearance—he was so short and stout! Willoughby Weiss first appeared that year, too, in Balfe's *Daughter of St. Mark*; and last of all, but not least, Joachim, the great violinist, appeared at the Philharmonic Concert, aged only fourteen. He played Beethoven's violin concerto the first night, and astonished all by his splendid tone and wonderful power in such a young lad. I remember hearing a most charming singer, Madame Castellan, in 1845, with such a sympathetic voice (soprano), and for many years heard her in different operas. When Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* was produced at Covent Garden, in 1847 or '48, with Pauline Viardot-Garcia as Fides, Madame Castellan sang the part of Berthe, the



betrothed of Jean de Leyden, and acted it charmingly. Mario's playing of the false Prophète was very fine, his handsome face and figure putting one in mind of the old Italian masters' visions of the Christ, and his singing was magnificent.

Covent Garden opened in 1847 as the "Royal Italian Opera," Costa being the conductor, having left Her Majesty's. The season commenced with the production of Meyerbeer's *Gli Ugonotti*, Madame Viardot-Garcia playing Valentina, and Castellan, Marguerite de Valois; Mario, Raoul de Nangis; and Marcello by Marini, who played the old Lutheran finely. St. Bris was sung by Tamburini, De Nevers by Tagliafico, and Alboni was the Page, her lovely voice haunting one's memory. In 1849 she left Covent Garden for Her Majesty's.

In 1847, December 6th, we went to Drury Lane Theatre to hear *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and it was in that opera that Sims Reeves first appeared in London after studying in Paris and Italy. He sang for some time in Italy at various towns, after first singing as Edgardo at La Scala in Milan. Never can I forget the marvellous beauty of his voice and the fine acting of the unhappy Edgardo, especially in the scene where Lucia has just signed the marriage contract with Arthur Bucklaw, and

Edgardo appears at the suddenly opened door. Mr. Sims Reeves's voice and gestures were simply perfect, grand, pathetic, and at last wound up to intense passion that made me shiver. The lovely "Fra Poco" in the last scene was most appealing



SIMS REEVES.

Photo by Watkins.

and pathetic, and I never heard even an Italian singer equal him in the part. Little did I dream that in seven years I should have the honour and great pleasure of singing with him in the *Messiah* at St. Martin's Hall, under the direction of John Hullah, at my *début*, December 20th, 1854. In 1848 Mr. Sims Reeves appeared at Her Majesty's Opera in *Linda di Chamouni*, with Tadolini as the heroine, but it was

played only once, owing to some disagreement with Lumley, the manager.

When first we were at Kennington we two girls went to a school close by, kept by Miss Penson. Two of the pupils were daughters of the celebrated

inventor of that very beautiful pottery known as "Doulton's Ware," and I well remember being invited to a children's party at their house in Lambeth, where I was fascinated by the quaint and pretty cups, mugs, jars, etc., of H. Doulton's most clever designs and inventions.

When quite young I had a great love for sketching in pencil, and later on used to imagine scenes from Sir Walter Scott's novels, which I read before I was ten years old ; and when nearly twelve my uncle, William Thomas, for years head-cashier at Glyn, Mills & Co.'s Bank, who was well acquainted with J. D. Harding, the well-known landscape-painter in water-colours, and author of many clever works on this interesting art, asked my father to take me to Mr. Harding's house in Abercorn Place, Maida Vale, that he might see my very primitive drawings. Mr. Harding was pleased with them, and asked my father to article me to him as his pupil for a certain number of years; but music was such a glorious thing in my father's mind that he could not bear the idea of giving it up whilst studying drawing and painting, which I must have done had I become a pupil of Mr. Harding's. Unfortunately no one can excel in either of the arts unless one's mind is completely devoted to the one or the other, and although I had no idea at that early age of appearing in

public, yet I felt I should lose all I had learned of the piano were I to give up my constant and adored practising. But I lost the chance of developing any talent in water-colours until I was fifteen. I took some lessons then in French from a M. de Montarcis, who, finding by chance that I was fond of drawing figures, asked my father to let me take lessons from him in crayon-drawing from sculptured busts and statuettes; afterwards he taught me water-colour drawing. M. de Montarcis was pleased with my work, and when I had painted many water-colours begged me to allow him to show several to a friend of his; unfortunately they were never returned to me. But a very romantic episode took place shortly after. One day our family was at early dinner (which suited my father's time best), when our old servant Maria (who lived twenty years with us till she left to be married) brought in a letter for my father. He read it with amazement in his face, looked at my mother, then at me, then exclaimed to Maria, "Who brought this?" "A tall, handsome young gentleman, sir, who could not speak English well, for when I asked him if he would wait for an answer, he said something that did not sound like English a bit, except 'No.'" Afterwards my mother told me it was an offer of marriage for me, addressed

to my father in true French style, begging permission to be introduced to me, and declaring that though he was a Roman Catholic no endeavour should be made to convert me, and that I should remain a Protestant if I wished! Some time afterwards I guessed from remarks made by M. de Montarcis that it was a friend of his who had written to my father, and, girl-like (I was only sixteen), I soon coaxed my mother to tell me the name of the handsome young man; but I never saw him, for my father, in thorough English manner, wrote to him and declined the honour. M. de Montarcis returned to France in a few years afterwards, matters having changed better for him, political troubles being the cause of his settling in England for many years. He gave me a letter in French he had received from Charles Dickens, which I have now printed :—

I DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,

YORK GATE, REGENT'S PARK,

7 *Décembre* 1848.

MONSIEUR,—J'ai été a la compagne depuis quelques semaines, et je n'ai que sur l'instant reçu votre billet.

Le plan que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de me proposer, m'a été déjà suggéré deux ou trois fois;

mais, comme je n'ai pas assez de loisir pour enterpenche la revision d'une traduction de mes lines, et comme il y auraient (j'ai peur) plusieurs difficultés mechaniques, a propos de leur publication à Londres et à Paris en même temps, je les ai toujours decliné, avec ma reconnaissance et mes remerciements.

Reçez, monsieur, l'assurance de ma consideration distinguée.

CHARLES DICKENS.

À Monsieur de Montarcis.

While we lived in Kennington about 1846, we girls became acquainted with a family living nearly opposite to us in Upper Kennington Lane, and even now (1904) I am still warmly attached to those remaining of the large number of sons and daughters—six of each! Our first introduction was sentimental and odd. For some months a relation of my father, Lizzie Whitechurch, who often stayed with us, used to look out of our bedroom window—a very nice, large attic — with my sister Mary, watching a good-looking young fellow at his attic window, and telling me (the short-sighted one of the family) how interested he seemed in glancing over at our window. One day we three were walking round Kennington Oval, when Lizzie said, “Bessie, here comes that good-looking boy”—(she was five years older than me,

being twenty and I fifteen)—“and I believe he is going to speak to us!” To my terror he walked by my side, and at last begged me to allow him to speak to me! We three girls rushed off home, clinging to each other, and hoped all was ended. But it was not to end so suddenly. A week after his two eldest sisters called on my mother, asking if her two daughters might go with them and their brother to Dulwich Gallery, as they had tickets for admission. My mother having seen these nice girls pass often, felt glad that friendship should grow up between us, and knowing my intense love for pictures, was very pleased that I should see paintings there, so willingly accepted the invitation for us. Thus we all went together there and back—charmed with each other, and “the good-looking fellow” told me to my surprise, when we were walking together on our way to Dulwich Gallery from the omnibus, that he was in love with me! It lasted several years, but he went abroad as civil engineer when somewhat older, and I heard constantly of his flirtations, so at last made up my mind not to correspond with him any longer. But we never felt angry with each other, and were friendly even after his marriage with a lady well known to his sisters and myself, who said to me one evening when I was dining at her



uncle's house, "Bessie, have you *really* given up George?" "Yes, indeed I have," said I. "Then I shall marry him," exclaimed she. And she did! Some years after his marriage he gradually fell into very poor health, and in 1897, when he died, I had a very interesting china clock, that used to be in his "den," as he called it, sent to me by his widow, at his request, which caused me pleasure yet sadness. His widow died a very few years after him, having a weak heart. Both these proposed marriages that I have spoken of are recalled to me by re-reading John Robson's odd "Fortune-telling," and it seems that in a way they explain the curious "Line of Matrimony" he found on my hand-palm, which "Fortune" I shall relate in a future chapter.

In 1846 Vauxhall Gardens were re-opened by Mr. Wardell, whom my father slightly knew. We all went many evenings, and the most distinct and interesting remembrance of it was the arrival of the real Ojibbeway Indians, who we went to see one Sunday before they were shown to the public. The fine, handsome faces and figures of the men, dressed in their picturesque dress, moccasins, and feathered headgear, the sweet, gentle ways of the wives and children, were all very fascinating, and it always gave me great pleasure to go to the "wigwams" and talk to them, giving



the children sweets, etc. The general impression on my mind, however, was that Vauxhall was dreary, ugly, spasmodically cheerful at times, and that the fireworks were the brightest and most exciting part of the evening's amusement. I believe Vauxhall was not a great success, and closed rather abruptly.

On May 20th, 1846, we were at Her Majesty's, expecting Mario to sing, but an apology was put up, and this irritated some of the subscribers very much. Afterwards, the ballet was to be "*Ondine*," with Cerito as principal, but another apology was offered, and "*Caterina*," with Lucile Grahn, was substituted. After a good deal of hissing had gone on, increasing very seriously, Perrot, the director of the ballet, and *danseur*, naturally became very excited, and rushed forward, showing by his gestures how angry he was with the stupid display of ill-temper shown by so many of the audience. But the hissing, howling, etc., increased, until poor Perrot rushed down to the footlights, shaking his clenched fists at the horridly noisy crowd, and at last, finding they would not listen to his endeavours to explain the necessity of changing the ballet, tore his hair with vehement gestures, and turning his back rushed off with strong expressions of contempt and disgust for the unparalleled anger shown by the party clique of the audience.

One evening, June 27th, 1850, my father came home to take me to the Opera, and told us of the dastardly attack on Queen Victoria, which happened that afternoon. She was driving home in an open carriage from the old Duke of Cambridge's house—where she had been to inquire after his health—to Buckingham Palace, when a man stepped forward and struck her on the forehead with his cane. He was seized at once, and found to be an ex-lieutenant, Robert Pate, and insane. My father told me the Queen had been expected to go to the Opera that night, but all hope of that was over. When we arrived all the audience were talking of the horrid attack, and Charles Gruneisen, a great friend of my father's, said there could be no chance of her Majesty being present, as she had certainly been hurt by the blow on her forehead. Suddenly the loud buzz of the endless conversation and warmly-expressed regrets stopped for a second; then rose cheer on cheer, rising more enthusiastically each time. For—there stood our beloved Queen, alone, at the front of the royal box, with the cruel red mark of the horrid, senseless blow on her forehead! Cheers and sympathetic exclamations continued for minutes, and at last "God save the Queen" was loudly called for. Her Majesty seated herself, and the Prince Consort then came forward, attended by the ladies and

gentlemen in waiting, while the audience joined warmly and enthusiastically in the National Anthem. Never can I forget the intense feeling rising in all hearts when the Queen's courageous way of presenting herself to her people, after the cowardly attack, showed her perfect trust in their love. I can see her now, standing quite alone (or rather, with the others at the back of the box), with her hands lightly touching the velvet cushions on the front of the box, pale, with the red mark across one side of her head!

At that time, 1850, I had no idea of entering the musical profession—had not taken a single singing lesson, though I used to practise all the contralto parts I had heard at the opera; so had not the slightest foreshadowing of the fact that a few years later on I should be actually singing at Buckingham Palace (May 3rd, 1858), at one of her Majesty's State Concerts. My memory recalls the pleasant evening it was. The Prince Consort was charmed with our singing of Mozart's quartet, "Ave verum," and came to us, with great courtesy saying how delighted all were with the charming colouring of the quartet, and, if it would not fatigue us, would we kindly repeat it? which of course we did with pleasure. Madame Tietjens, Miss Victoire Balfe, myself, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Signor Belletti were the singers, Costa accompanying on the piano.

I was much amused by the careful action of the Duke of Wellington (son of "The Duke"). He was evidently watching the awkwardness of the ladies' dresses—over crinolines in those days—being pressed up as they all passed between the rows of



*To my dear friend Bessie Palmer  
Theresa Tiepman*

Photo by Orillet.

chairs to take their seats before the concert commenced. He beckoned to one of the footmen-in-waiting, spoke to him, and in a few minutes a cane was brought to the Duke. Then, as each lady passed between the rows of seats, he carefully pressed the swelling skirt

with the cane, which kept it down smoothly, spite of the tiresome crinolines. Her Majesty wore a charming gold-coloured satin dress, with three flounces embroidered with white flowers; and, curiously enough, I had a dress on almost exactly like it. When the Queen graciously came and

bowed to us all, speaking to those she knew, she smiled pleasantly to me as I curtsied, and looked also at my dress. Madame Tietjens afterwards whispered to me: "Why, the Queen and you are both dressed the same!"

In 1850 Tamberlik made his first appearance at the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, as Masaniello; he sang and played the part with great fervour, though his voice was not a perfect organ, but he had the power of producing the C in alt. with great ease and resonance, being also a very dramatic personator of Masaniello. The same year Halévy's *La Tempesta* was produced at Her Majesty's Opera, I think, and I can never forget the splendid realisation of Caliban by that magnificent singer and actor, Lablache; his portrayal of the half-animal, half-devilish character was grand.

In 1851 I heard for the first time Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, with Grisi, Viardot-Garcia, Anna Zerr, Mario, Ronconi, Stigelli, and Formes. Anna Zerr I had already heard at my uncle Joseph Thomas's house, some time before, but her voice did not please me; it was shrill and hard.

That same year was the Great Exhibition opened in Hyde Park, and one Sunday before the commencement my father had a ticket for entrance of two that day to the immense "glass house," so took

me to see it. Just after entering we heard a most lovely voice, like a silver clarion, singing "God



MISS CLARA NOVELLO.

From a Crayon Drawing by Severn, 1842.

save the Queen," and I immediately recognised the voice of the celebrated singer Clara Novello, whom I had heard many times in oratorios and concerts. Her lovely voice floated over the whole building most wonderfully, and after the opening of the Exhibition I read many notices in the newspapers of the beautiful effect of her singing that day.

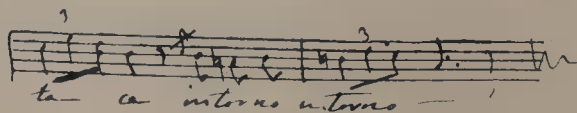
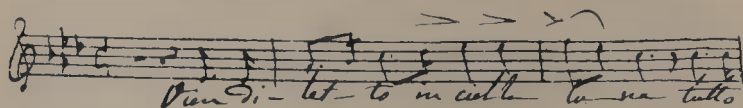
### CHAPTER III.

IN 1845 my father was introduced to Signor Casolani and his wife. He was a very good double-bass player at Covent Garden Opera, and a handsome Italian; his wife was an interesting, clever Englishwoman. They soon were most friendly, and often spent the day with us, having to leave in time for the performances at the Opera, where Signor Casolani was the head contrabasso. He happened to see some little figures I had drawn, painted, and cut out in cardboard, and which I slipped into facsimiles of Signora Grisi's principal in the operas, also painted by me, as memorials of the parts she so often sang—Norma, Semiramide, Valentina, Elena (*La Donna del Lago*), Lucrezia Borgia, etc. Greatly pleased with them, he begged me to allow him to take some to Madame Grisi, so I took care to finish some very carefully before giving them to him for her. To my great delight she sent him a nice letter, enclosing her autograph and two lines of music, written by her for me, and here photographed and inserted. Her way of spelling "Bessie" is funny, but



coi complimenti di  
Mad.<sup>e</sup> Grisi al Sig. Casolani  
e pregandolo di ringraziare  
Miss Palmer della  
graziosa offerta delle  
Figueine che ha molto  
ammirato, e che accetta  
con gran piacere —

Miss Betty Palmer



Londra 19 Agosto 1849  
Carlo G. G.

Casolani himself always pronounced my name as if the double "s" was double "z." M. Prospère, the great ophicleide player, was introduced to us by Casolani, also Signor Zamboni, who used to teach Grisi her operas. He told me that, with all her vast natural talent for singing, she could not read music easily, and he used to go through over and over again all the operas she had to acquire; she was quick in learning them by ear, and he went over the soprano part constantly with care and distinctness for her.

Signor Casolani and his wife left for New York in June 1851, and she corresponded with my mother for some years. In 1851 she wrote telling us of the charming singing of a young girl named Adelina Patti, aged sixteen, who had sung in opera in New York with much success in 1850. When Casolani left England we knew he was suffering greatly from lung disease, but hoped that the change from England's unfortunately moist climate might reduce the delicacy of the pulmonary organs. Before he left I was allowed to copy a crayon likeness of him, and it gave me pleasure to possess it and have it framed. A very few years after we had the sadness of poor Cesare's death, to our abiding regret.

I think it was about the same year (1848) that Sam Emery (father of the charming Winifred

Emery), the famous comedian, came to our house in Chepstow Villas. He was kind-hearted, but abrupt in his method of speaking, and I was frightfully nervous in talking and singing to him, for I had seen him play so many villains (and so naturally!) that I was quite afraid of him. Jonas Chuzzlewit had been the part I had last seen him play when we met, and it was wonderful how truly he realised Dickens's horrid Jonas!

One evening while living in Kennington, about 1845, the popular composer of many years then, Augustine Wade, whose song "Meet me by moonlight alone" was a great favourite, came in with my father, and hearing me sing some songs, he begged me to sing him a song of his, published in *The Illustrated London News*, 1843, called "Absence of a Day," and was very kind in telling me I sang it charmingly. I had not had any singing lessons then, so these kind praises gave me courage to practise as often and as carefully as I could, teaching myself all the songs that were not too high for me; for although I could occasionally sing an A or B $\flat$  above the stave, yet if I tried to sing soprano melodies I felt my throat husky, so kept to contralto songs.

Tom Alpass, of the *Morning Post*, was a great friend of my father's, also his brother Seymour Alpass, who was an extremely clever chemist.

Thomas Holman, who became Governor of Van Diemen's Gaol in 1841, was also very much esteemed by us; and "Frank" (Francis Burdett Franklyn), of the well-known firm of printers, Robson, Levy & Franklyn, was quite adored by us children; he was so full of fun, and always trying to give us pleasure in some way. His mother and he lived in a delightful old-fashioned house, with such a fine garden, in Stoke Newington—Paradise Place, or Terrace, I think it was called, just in face of the New River, that ran outside Chisholm Park, over which all the front windows of Mrs. Franklyn's house had a beautiful view. My sister and I used to go and spend a few days occasionally with her, enjoying it immensely. The garden was full of all sorts of old-fashioned trees, shrubs, and flowers, with a quantity of fine apple and pear trees, while on the walls were a great number of plum, apricot, and peach trees. What a profusion, too, of raspberry and gooseberry bushes there were, and how we—Lizzie Whitechurch, my sister Pollie, and myself—used to enjoy our visits to the dear old lady, who always told us, young as we were, to eat as much fruit as we liked! It was at her house in the 'forties that I first saw fireplaces filled with large bunches of flowers; once I remember in her drawing-room the grate being decorated by a mass of gorgeous peonies in splendid

bloom, the lovely colour of the flowers being greatly heightened by the deep green of the leaves. Years after, it became the fashion; *then*, it was a marvel to our young minds.

Frank was a very clever, witty, and kind-hearted young man, and wrote a long poem, comic to the last degree, on the departure of Mr. Thomas Holman for Van Diemen's Land in 1841. I insert it here to show the prevalent amusing style of those days—very like Tom Hood's, in fact; also some of his "Birthday Odes," most droll, written to me when quite young:—

### Departed his Home

IN

ARUNDEL STREET IN YE STRAND, LONDON,

SATURDAY, YE 31 JULY, MDCCCXLI.,

THAT PROPER GENTLEMAN

MASTER THOMAS HOLMAN.

---

On y<sup>e</sup> said day, certaine of his Friends, in a Belle Sauvage mood, witnessed his appearance on y<sup>e</sup> Stage; and shortly thereafter he quitted the Scene by the Exit-er coach, with intent to undergo certaine farewell Eatings and Drinkings at Ply-mouth: having done which, he departed, with a sigh, for Ho!-bart Town.

In his possession he hath a golden Ring, to him presented by his Friends at a farewell feast on July y<sup>e</sup> 20, 1841; which Friends peradventure it will ofttimes delight him to turn

around his finger. Ye said Ring hath a device on y<sup>e</sup> signet  
—a distant star over the waters,—above which standeth  
y<sup>e</sup> motto,

“PRESENT THO’ AFAR.”

Likewise ye said ring hath about its inner side that which  
followeth:

**THOMAS HOLMAN,**

FROM ATTACHED FRIENDS,

July 20, 1841.

“——I am in their bosoms, and I know

Wherefore they do it.”—*Shakespeare.*

And ye said Thomas Holman also beareth about him a  
certaine Ballad that was chaunted in a right merrie company  
of his Friends, on y<sup>e</sup> night of y<sup>e</sup> 27th July, 1841; of which  
hereunto is appended a true copy, with brief Notes from the  
hand of y<sup>e</sup> same ancient Friend that writeth this.

**The Ballad.**

Ye Rhymester nameth  
his hero and his crosses.

TOM HOLMAN, though no tavern host,

A *chequered* life had led,

Becometh floury.

And acted long a London *rôle*,

Though he was *country bred*.

Among his friends you might have found

Tall, short, and lean, and fat ;

Groweth personal.

Some good at songs, and jokes, and *Hall*

At Irish tales quite *Pat*.

Hath an eye to trade—

Some fond of work, some needing none,

Some hol’d day making men,

Some luckless editors, like sheep,

Kept prisoners by the *pen*.

Albeit to pursuits.

Some fond of rowing, some of sights,

And some of warm debate,

- Toucheth the domestic.      And some who sat by their snug fire,  
And envied not the *grate*.
- Hinteth at ye voyage.      Now many a year these worthy men  
With Tom had lived and laugh'd,  
Craft *sans* deceit.      And dreamt not he would be shipp'd off  
One day by Sydney *craft*.
- The hero hath home-qualms.      When long he'd brooded o'er the thing,  
Says Tom "This scheme can't stand,  
For though I send myself to *sea*,  
My heart won't leave the *Strand*.
- Doubteth of elevation by corporation and parliamentation.      "Become Lord Mayor or Alderman  
In Hobart Town I can't,  
Nor even stand for an *M.P.*,  
Although an *em-i-grant*."
- Resolveth to adventure.      But now at length he was resolved,  
No friend said don't do so,  
For his mind he wisely had *wound up*  
So he was sure *to go*.
- Reasoneth well.      Says Tom, "It grieves me friends to leave,  
Yet cash I ought to hoard,  
But cannot in my *narrow* sphere,  
So I'd better try *a-broad*.
- His destination stated, and ye wherefore.      "To Hobart Town I go (says he),  
An easier crust to earn,  
And not as here to *broil and stew*,  
Although I go to *Burn*.
- Nameth a warm friend.      "A hearty friend is Burn, and so  
Are many left behind,  
And I can tell by every soul  
What's passing in his mind."
- Glanceth at many others.      "A hearty friend is Burn, and so  
Are many left behind,  
And I can tell by every soul  
What's passing in his mind."
- Seeth through a mill-stone.



- Ye lamentation of friends. "O Tom (they cry), with our sad lot  
You surely must condole man—  
Though 'mongst us some have 'better  
halves,'  
We've now no more a *Whole-man*.
- Their strange prediction. "Tom, you'll get married—for in lanes  
The longest there a curve is,  
And *thus* in Hobart Town you'll start  
Your *New UNITED Service*.
- Toucheth his late *Watt's*  
what. "Snug Arundel you'll then forget,  
And this one day will some see,  
Tom at his own large house stare up,  
And his own Mrs. *Tom-see*."
- His forsaken home is  
noted, and ye name of his land-  
lady perpetrated. Says Tom, "Old friends, if fate decrees 't,  
I'm sure I'll not confute her—  
I may indeed there seek a wife,  
Since here I leave a *Soular*.
- Ye hero playeth upon ye  
names of friends. "Unwed or wed, O may, old friends,  
I find like you a new set,  
For here whatever part I've played,  
I've always had my *Cue-set*.
- One that maketh some  
noise in ye world. "One says a fortune I shall find,  
And days more bright and calmer,  
His fortune-telling *should* be true,  
For he's a well-known *Palmer*.
- He wisheth. "But Joe, that tumbles, leaps, and jumps  
From here near to Kirkcaldy,  
No tricks he'll play the morn I sail,  
'Twill make him Joe *Grim-all-day*.
- He speaketh of one that  
belongeth to ye "Black-  
fryars' companie." One "Joseph A.," not  
"A Joseph"; good at  
ye bottle, better as ye  
tumbler.

Ye parting token left

“ Oh ! farewell lads—a parting gift  
Of hair will sometimes please—  
As mine’s too scant to give curls each,  
I’ll leave *one lock* with *Keys*.

With a secure friend.

“ Hopes of ye future—  
Friends of ye past.”

“ Though death may part us, still may we  
To heaven at Peter’s call pass,  
For when us friends meet at the gate,  
The Saint will sure cry *All-pass*.”

Ye “ great Tom ” is here  
sounded, that hath so  
famous a clapper.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ye hero departeth—hath  
pleasaunt voyage.

Now off Tom sailed—smooth was the sea,  
As if ’twere melted butter,  
His ship so fast, though barky rigged,  
Was one you might *Call-cutter*.

We *Calcutta* described.

He becometh qualmy—

Save that day when the wind got up,  
Says Tom, “ M’ accounts at last—  
Well, I’ll ‘ stand the hazard of a *die*,  
Since my life’s set on this—*cast*.”

Groweth brave :

Quoteth Shakespeare.

Ye new world openeth  
unto him.

But soon in Hobart Town he fixed,  
And fame and wealth came in—  
Says he, “ Let Cornwall boast of lead,  
But here’s the place for *tin*.”

He hath mettle—

Prophecy fulfilled.

Is beloved by ye worthy :

And thus he lived, loved by the good,  
While the bad found Tom a nettlér,—  
Their plots he marr’d, and oft they cry’d,  
“ O Lord, he *is* a *SETTLER* !”

Dreaded by ye reprobate.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lo ! after years five, he  
returneth

And now, my friends, you’ll just suppose  
It’s eighteen-forty-six—  
Here’s Tom returned, and o’er his glass  
Again with us to *mix*.

To his choice spirits.

Prophecy again cometh to pass.	He's brought his wife, a handsome dame, With accomplishments to suit—
Prospects in ye way of leather.	A little Miss for Ma to teach, Two Boys for Tom <i>to boot</i> .
A right heartie toast.	And so we'll drink his health, and Ma's, And Miss, and the little Tommies ;
Ana-tommy-cal deduc- tion.	From flesh of 's flesh and bone of 's <i>bone</i> We're sure of young <i>bone hommies</i> .
Ye glasses filled in <i>Brim-</i> <i>my</i> style, and ye toast drunk.	Upstanding, then, we'll drink their healths, And their little ones' to be,
Vide note to "boot."	And as their measure in that line,
"Descend, ye glorious Nine!"	We'll give them "three times three!"

July 27, 1841.—A *Date* worth a *Fig*.

Verily the Rhymester hath lain bare his poverty, inasmuch as there be many right worthy Friends that he hath not gotten in a line. Nevertheless, he saith he hath had a rough road to travel for so sorry a jade as his muse rideth; and hence hath he avoided a *Stone* and a *Rut-ledge*, lest his Wag-on should be overturned. Likewise he meddleth not with "*Burnett's History*," as it hath no scope for Reformation. Shakespeare asketh "What's in a name?" The Rhymester saith, "*Why-man*, in many names a pun lurketh, although in others it be not apparent." Wherefore he leaveth in ye stream some worthies that, with a *Water-man*, a *Mon-ro*, and a *Sand-ford*, he must *Let-ford* it together.

His Ballad also neglecteth to touch upon the fixed resolve to keep cheerilie each returning Anniversary of ye 27th July; albeit ye proposal warmed every breast, and wrung forth a *Heart-knell* of good-fellowship.

God speed be that is missed from amongst us.

When I was half twelve years old my mother suggested me to send Frank a valentine, the words of which she had either read or heard, as follows:—

“You are little, you are witty,  
 You are single, that’s a pity!  
 If you’re single for my sake  
 A happy couple we shall make.”

Frank wrote as follows in the note he sent to my father, containing the droll poem directed to me:—

“An anonymous but honourable gentleman will feel obliged by Mr. Palmer delivering the enclosed—of course, unopened.—Middlesex, Feb. 1st, 1843.”

#### TO MISS E. PALMER.

Oh! would that I drew  
 Sweet flowers like you—  
 In a garland I’d wreath such a lot,  
 That Cupid should own  
 No Porters alone  
 Could bear such a true-lover’s *knot*.

Oh! would I could paint  
 In tints only faint,  
 Two doves, by young Hymen let loose!  
 But no! I must still  
 Leave doves for a quill!  
 And remind you, I fear, of a goose!

But, oh, let me quote  
 (I’ve learnt it by rote)

The whole of your sweet Valentine;  
While at ev'ry word  
My breast feels a *chord*,  
And my heart is tied fast with each line !

---

TO F. B. F.

Your little and witty,  
And single—a pity !  
Yet, if you are so for my sake,  
Oh ! I will be thine,  
If you will be mine,  
And a true happy couple we'll make !

*Little* ! Oh, pretty Miss Palmer,  
In moments much calmer  
Than those of your Juvenile Ball,  
With sorrow I've thought  
“Oh ! while I'm thus *short*  
What lady would have me a-tall ?”

*Witty* !! But you say I'm witty !  
Well, flattery's pretty  
When by a young lady 'tis spoke ;  
Yet, alas, some refuse me,  
And say “Did they choose me,  
I should marry them only *in joke* !”

*Single* !!! But sure it's no pity  
I'm single—but criti-  
Cally speaking it follows of course—

It IS for your sake—  
 Others only can make  
 Me *double* by reck'ning my horse !  
 If you'll, etc. !!! Then ask me not "*if!*"—  
 I'd blast Round Down Cliff  
 If it hindered me calling thee mine ;  
 No Orson or mild man,  
 No angry or wild man,  
 Shall vanquish your *true Valentine!*

The next is Frank's "Impromptu on a Young Lady's Birthday":—

Hail, Ninth of August !  
 Altho' the wind's raw gust  
 Now says no great shakes for the weather,  
 Yet, as it's a birthday,  
 It shall be a mirth-day,  
 And find our hearts light as a feather !  
 'Tis true, indeed, Bessy,  
 Upon a day messy  
 Your birthday—the Fourteenth—you keep up,  
 Yet may you be happy  
 E'en as in days pappy,  
 Through every year as you creep up !  
 May health and enjoyment  
 And children's annoyance,  
 And life's other blessings be ever before ye,  
 Till Time's settling rays  
 Gild your last cheerful days,  
 And a hundred years' story rests o'er ye !

—F. B. FRANKLYN.

Frank was very fond of us all; we always looked on him as an elder brother, and when in 1852 he left for New South Wales, it was a terrible loss to all our family. It was the wish of his senior partners, Messrs. Robson and Levy, that he should start a newspaper—*The Argus*—in Melbourne, so he left England, and I wish I had kept the humorous letters describing Melbourne and its inhabitants, etc.; but we lent them to so many friends that unfortunately they got lost, so I cannot even insert one. In 1865 he returned to England, gave me the photo I have reproduced, and wished me to go with him to Melbourne as his wife; but I had always looked on him as a brother, so could not consent to this. He returned to Melbourne, and not many years after we had the sad news that he was dead, quite unexpectedly. Amongst his friends was John Robson, brother of his partner Charles Robson. John was Professor of Greek and Latin at the London University College. He, too, was a great favourite of ours, and often came to see us. One



FRANCIS BURDETT FRANKLYN.

Photo by Davies &amp; Co.



evening he caught hold of my hand, and looked at the palm very seriously; my father's cousin, Lizzie Whitechurch, exclaimed, "Can you really tell fortunes, Mr. Robson?" He allowed that he *could*, so Lizzie and I both begged him to tell ours, and we prevailed on him to write down the mysterious palmistry he read on our hands. I give mine, for, strangely enough, some of the events he predicted, *did* happen, though others have not occurred! The fortune was commenced with a mysterious sign, and several words in Latin, which follow now:—

“*Augusti 9°.*

“Jupiter oppositus Veneris: Mercurius cum Saturno  
certat nec victoria explicata.

“Bessii Palmeris fortuna.

“1mo. The line of life is of great length, which betokens a long life. Until about the middle, it is uniform and single, implying good health up to middle life. After that, there is a parallel line for a considerable distance, a sign of some years of ill-health. Past the point marking the grand climacteric, there is a net-work of lines, indications of a complication of diseases amid which life will be extinguished.

“2mo. The line of fortune has a double origin, denoting that her property will arrive from two sources; it is uninterrupted, and becomes gradually

more marked, and finally unites with the line of life. The inference to be deducted from these signs is that no reverse of fortune will be experienced; that the wealth of B. P. will gradually increase, and that it will remain with her till death.

“3mo. The line of matrimony: this commences in a faintly-marked line, nearly as low down in the palm as the line of life. The inference from this is that the *thoughts* of B. P. were turned towards the subject of beaux and husbands at a very juvenile age; at a point indicating between twenty and thirty, this line becomes more marked, and branches into two lines, forming an angle of about 40 degrees, and extending to within the same distance of the edge of the palm, where they disappear. These indications are equivocal: the two lines may represent *lovers*, in which case their disappearance implies that neither of them will ever be transformed into the nearer and dearer relation of *husband*. This seems the more likely interpretation, since the other will be seen to involve the supposition of a total disregard on the part of B. P. of the laws both of GOD and MAN. For if we adopt the other explanation the two lines must represent *husbands*, both co-existing, so that B. P. would render herself liable to the penalty for *bigamy*! Near the point where the lines terminate, a number of transverse lines unite them: this shows that, if the lines represent *lovers*, they will be kept in mutual ignorance until many years after they began

to pay their addresses; but then unforeseen circumstances will open their eyes, and there will be numerous and violent disputes between them, which may terminate *fatally* to one or both of them. On the other supposition—viz., that the lines imply husbands—we must infer the same results to them.

“4mo. The line of locality remains nearly parallel to that of life; nothing beyond temporary sojourns on the Continent being indicated. At about the age of forty years, a long and extensive journey in England will occur; and as the line which represents this joins the line of fortune, the journey will be attended with pecuniary benefit.

“5mo. The line of moral and intellectual qualities is united until near their terminations, when they branch out, implying that at about the age of sixty, antagonism will arise between the two sets of faculties; shortly afterwards, and some time previous to death, both sets of faculties will become extinct. About middle age two separate exertions of the intellect will increase B. P.’s fortune—probably the composition of two books; this is shown by two lines proceeding from the line of qualities and reaching that of fortune.”

This curious “fortune-telling” was carefully preserved by my mother, and I never saw it again until quite recently. I was looking through many letters addressed to my father, together with some

to my mother and myself, when I came across this, and found John Robson had actually predicted that I should find in "two sources" the wherewithal to live upon! This really *is* the truth, for in 1886, when I had nearly ceased working in my profession, I inherited from my dear old friend Mrs. Williams (mother of a wonderfully-gifted daughter, Sadie, who was very much attached to me) ample means to live on, thus relieving me from my arduous work—teaching singing, which I had continued for many years. The prediction of "writing a book," too, had also begun before I refound the "Palmistry," but I have yet to learn if John Robson's sanguine prophecy anent its success is to be realised! It is also correct in foretelling the ill-health destined for me at my middle age, for certainly since that time I have not enjoyed much good health.

## CHAPTER IV.

IN 1851 my father met with heavy losses in his business, and I determined to ask C. L. Gruneisen, the well-known musical critic of the *Morning Post*, a friend, too, of my father's, if he thought I had sufficient voice to try and succeed as a singer. His opinion was very reassuring to me, and by his advice I entered the Royal Academy of Music as a student, not having had any singing lessons up to that time, except the constant hearing of all the great singers since I was nine years old. When I commenced studying in September 1851, Manuel Garcia's class, which I had chosen to enter (having called on him on August 9th, and he said he would like to have me as his pupil), was unfortunately full, so I was placed in Mr. Frank Cox's class, who taught me for six months with great care, and certainly improved my voice by his excellent teaching. Then Signor Crivelli heard me at one of the little concerts given in the R.A. room, and suggested that I should enter his class next term. Imagine my surprise when the old man positively asserted that my voice was

soprano, and made me learn many songs of Grisi's!

After some months I found my voice became thin and scratchy, and my throat was always irritable. One day, at the usual weekly concert, the Rev. W. H. Cazalet, the superintendent, spoke to me after I sang "Al dolce guidami" (*Anna Bolena*), and asked what made my voice so thin. I exclaimed, "'Tis through Signor Crivelli insisting on my singing soprano songs instead of contralto!" "Hush, pray, hush!" exclaimed Mr. Cazalet; "you must not speak against Signor Crivelli—he is too clever to have made a mistake!"

At the beginning of January 1853 I wrote to Mr. Cazalet, saying that I wished to be placed in Signor Garcia's class, as I was sure Signor Crivelli had mistaken my voice. To this I had an answer, January 3rd, saying that my request was contrary to the rules, and that he could not suggest such a change to Signor Crivelli. I wrote back at once saying that when I went through the necessary examination by Mr. W. H. Holmes, before entering the R.A.M., my name was entered to be a pupil of Signor Manuel Garcia, but there being no vacancy then in his class, I was placed in Mr. Frank Cox's, who treated my voice as contralto, and taught me extremely well, correcting many faults. As Crivelli had quite altered the tone and quality of

my voice, I requested I should be *at once* placed in Garcia's class. Mr. Cazalet answered that my request should be brought before the Committee, as he could not permit anything that did not conform strictly with the rules. He added, however, that he had placed the affair before Signor Crivelli, who refused under *any* circumstances to take me back as his pupil. On January 17th came the last letter, stating that the Committee refused to permit me to go into Signor Garcia's class, and unless Signor Crivelli would kindly take me back as his pupil, I could not return to the Academy! Of course I wrote at once and said I would *not* rejoin Crivelli's class, and certainly would *not* return at all to the Academy.

When I entered the Academy in September 1851, I had lessons also in harmony and counterpoint from Henry Banister, who was most kind in giving his lessons; and when the December holidays were about to commence, he asked me if I would like to continue my lessons during the holidays, because, if so, he would willingly correct and explain the faults and return them, if I would send them to his private address by post. This I did with great pleasure, and was quite sorry to lose his teaching when I left the Academy in January 1853. I was also very fond of practising on the piano and taking lessons from Mr. F.



Jewson, who told me after some months' teaching that I ought to make the piano my first study (having entered singing as the first), as he considered my playing extremely good—thanks, in my mind, to the splendid teaching of dear Mrs. R. Lloyd. I succeeded very quickly with Signor Comelati, the Italian master, who declared I *must* have descended from an Italian ancestor, my accent was so true! I have often cherished sweet thoughts of Mrs. Lloyd; she took me to the Academy in 1851, and it happened that W. H. Holmes was the only Director present, but he was very kind, and pleased with both my playing and singing. I sang a song of his to him—a great favourite in those days: "In my childhood I have wandered;" "Scenes of Childhood" was the title, I believe.

While I was in Frank Cox's class I was told to sing "Quando miro" (Mozart) at the Hanover Square Rooms, their yearly concert being generally given there. My throat got very dry with nervousness, and having to remain on the platform in a row with other pupils, I put a black currant lozenge in my mouth, thinking it would dissolve before I had to sing; but alas! soon after I had placed it there, Charles Lucas, the clever conductor, bent towards me (I was sitting near the centre, next to the stand on which the conductor's music

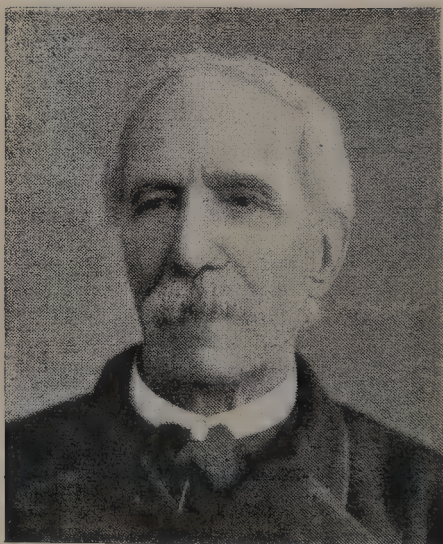
rested) and whispered, "Now, my dear, 'tis your turn!" I hastily swallowed the lozenge in terror, and am not surprised that all notices in the papers of that time (1852) spoke of the great nervousness which showed itself in my singing—and no wonder, knowing how the wretched lozenge stuck itself half-way down my throat! I have a cutting out of some paper dated April 24th, 1852, but no name of the newspaper. Of me it says:—"Miss Palmer, a *débutante* of some promise, detracted in some degree from her evident capability by a nervousness pardonable in a first appearance. Though manifest in the recitative, 'A questa sera,' it wore off considerably as she proceeded with the aria, 'Quando miro' (Mozart), and the sound and sweet quality of a pleasing voice, susceptible of much improvement by an accession of confidence, was plainly perceptible."

On leaving the Academy, I went to Garcia's house, George Street, Hanover Square, and explained to him how my voice had been changed. He made me sing a few notes, and then told me I must rest entirely for a year, not singing at all and not talking too much, so as to give the throat, which was much out of order, complete rest. After six quiet months I went again to him, when he tried my voice, and said I could now begin to practise; so I commenced lessons at once with

him, and soon found it improving, thanks to the careful way in which he made me practise, bringing the voice back to its proper register, and giving me Italian contralto songs, after taking many lessons—songs which greatly helped to produce the best quality of tone, the Italian language being so helpful towards the best production of the voice, owing to the breadth and purity of the vowels, while the firmness of the consonants gives earnestness and distinctness to the pronunciation of words and adds to their expressiveness.

It is a great pleasure to me to still see my most clever dear master, Manuel Garcia (March 1904), for he was ninety-nine on March 17th this year, and is marvellously active and full of interest in music; indeed, he has taught pupils until just lately. I had the immense pleasure of visiting him quite recently, and found him very bright and interested in current topics. He noticed on my finger a lovely ring, turquoise and diamonds, left to me by my old friend, J. Sims Reeves. Poor fellow, he was so thankful to me before he died, for having got him the Civil Pension of £100 per annum, which unfortunately commenced to be his great help only in the February, while he died in the October of 1900. Garcia was delighted with the ring, and spoke so kindly to me about my having helped the great singer, that I am very

proud to have good portraits of both Garcia and Sims Reeves; indeed of the last-named I have several photographs that he gave me, so I give two or three. I trust that I shall see my good master, Manuel Garcia, soon again. When I was leaving on my last visit, Garcia most kindly



SENOR MANUEL GARCIA.

By permission of The Draycott Gallery (late Barraud's), 263. Oxford Street, London, W.

placed my hand on his arm, and led me from the drawing - room (after saying good-bye to his dear wife and daughter) to the gate of the garden in front of his pleasant house, "Mon Abri," in Cricklewood. At his wonderful age such a bright man, it is

seemingly marvellous that he can continue to notice and take such deep interest in people and things.

In August 1853 I sang at a private concert given by M. Alexandre Billet, a French pianist with good execution but rather wanting in good expression. I had heard him at my uncle Joseph Thomas's house in Finsbury Square, where I had

once met a great number of artists, long before I dreamed of entering the profession: Madame Anna Zerr, Mdlle. Merau, Madame Greiffenhagen (Miss Helène Cundall), Mdlle. Eugénie Coulon (a clever pianist), Sara Flower (a well-known contralto in those days), and her married sister, Mrs. Sargood, wife of Sergeant Sargood. The last-named sister had a very small voice, but sang privately with great taste and expression. M. Nerestan was the editor of *Le Courier de l'Europe*, which my uncle had started many years before, and continued until 1859. A clever artist, F. W. Fairholt, used to visit also, and I was much interested in a book he published, with an immense number of designs by him of all the old costumes in every century of kings, queens, nobles, peasants, and soldiers—a book of great help in choosing dresses for operas representing past times. His book is named *Costumes in England from the Earliest Period to the Close of the Eighteenth Century*. There were nearly seven hundred engravings, drawn on wood by Mr. Fairholt. The book was very interesting.

Besides professional and literary people, I met at my uncle's a charming Russian lady, Countess Panin, with her daughters, Princess Stcherbatoff and Marie Panin, and a ward of the Countess, Mariette Schvanvitch. The Countess was delighted with my

voice and singing (though it was before I had had any lessons at the Academy); and one evening I went with my cousins and uncle to Dover Street, where they were staying, and remember the two daughters persuaded me to be dressed as a Russian, then begged me to sing while in this quaint costume. I remember, too, once seeing Louis Blanc there—a tiny, little man. After singing in 1853 at Alexandre Billet's private concert, he asked me to appear at his public concert, given in the small hall (St. Martin's), March 13th, 1854. In the *Morning Herald* of the next day there was a kind notice of my singing, which I quote:—"A Miss Palmer, a *débutante*, made a favourable impression by her delivery of Haydn's 'Mermaid's Song,' which she sang with good taste, although with the timidity inseparable from a first appearance." In the *Times* of the same date it gives an account of the music at M. Billet's concert, with a short notice of the singing as follows:—"The pianoforte music was relieved by some agreeable songs of Haydn, Mozart, and Molique, sung by Mrs. Newton Frodsham and Miss Palmer. The first lady is well known. Miss Palmer, we believe a *débutante*, has a very pleasing mezzo-soprano voice, and sings with feeling." The "Mermaid's Song" (Haydn) was rather more of the mezzo-soprano style than contralto; so that, I think, gave

J. W. Davison, the musical critic of the *Times*, his notion that I was not a contralto.

Until June 1854 my mind was very unhappy, for I could not get any engagements, though I tried all sorts of ways, but could not succeed. One day I even called at Mark Smythson's house, to ask if I could be engaged as contralto in the chorus at Her Majesty's Opera House. He asked if I knew the choruses then by heart. I answered "No," but that I would soon learn them if he would tell me which opera to study. He shook his head seriously, and said he could not recommend me, as I did not show him what I could do by singing several chorus parts right off by heart! I suppose that not having been introduced to him he doubted if I had the necessary quickness to learn by heart, so would not give me the chance of singing even a song to let him hear the quality of my voice.

In May 1854 I had a letter of introduction to John Hullah, well known as a clever musician, and a first-rate conductor of the oratorios and concerts given by him every year at St. Martin's Hall in Long Acre, just at the end of Bow Street. Through some mistake I could not see him till June, when he heard me sing some Italian songs and praised them very much, then asked if I sang the contralto songs in oratorios. Of course I had not studied any with Crivelli or Manuel Garcia, nor



even with Frank Cox; so Mr. Hullah kindly said that as he was then leaving for Switzerland he would give me the key of his music library, that I might take out oratorio after oratorio, and study them till he returned in November. On his return I hastened to call on him, and sang several of Handel's songs, also Mendelssohn's, to him, and he at once said that I should sing in the *Messiah* on December 20th, and begged me to go through the songs several times, so that he might show me the traditional style of singing in oratorios. What intense interest and determination to work hard this gave me can well be understood by young beginners in the profession. I can never forget the kindness shown me the night of my *début*. Such a great encore was awarded me for "He shall feed His flock"! I was trembling from head to foot with nervousness; indeed, James Howell, the well-known double-bass player, who sat just behind where I stood, told my father some time after that he was watching me and fully prepared to place his instrument quickly aside and catch me, as he felt sure I should faint. But, despite his fear, when I finished "He shall feed His flock," and Miss Julia Bleadon rose to sing "Come unto Him," which follows immediately, I was tremendously encored, the applause continuing, until I was asked by John Hullah to repeat the song, which was

loudly applauded again. It gave me infinite joy, and much more self-possession in the continuation of singing the later songs. That night Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves sang, and Lewis Thomas made his first appearance in London, though he had sung for years in Worcester Cathedral choir. Mr. Hullah had the duet, "O Death, where is thy sting?" sung in the *Messiah*, though it was rarely done, and I felt very nervous again when the great tenor, Sims Reeves, crossed over to my side of the orchestra (where the contralto and bass always sit) to take up this duet with me, and his kind praise gave me more courage and cheered me greatly.



BESSIE PALMER.

Shortly after my *début* I was telegraphed for to Liverpool, to sing in place of Miss Dolby in the *Messiah*, as she was unable to do so, having a bad cold; and evidently I pleased the Liverpool people, for I was often engaged there afterwards. Not long after that I was engaged to sing at a concert

at Southampton, where Mr. Sims Reeves also sang. He and his wife were staying at the same hotel, and they asked me to sup with them after the concert. When we had finished supper, Mr. Reeves asked me why I used chest-notes so high. I explained that Mr. Hullah had told me that my middle register was not strong enough, therefore I had better take F and G in chest quality, or I should not carry those notes well to the farther end of St. Martin's Hall. Then Mr. Reeves took me to the piano, and showed how to strengthen the middle register by bringing down the head quality carefully and mixing it with the middle register. By closely noting what he explained, and by practising as he told me, I soon strengthened the weak middle voice and only used chest-notes up to Eb, unless there should be a real necessity for power on the E natural occasionally. Some short time after I was singing at a musical evening at Mr. Hullah's when he remarked: "How much rounder and fuller your middle voice has developed!" to my great delight.

That the keeping of the voice in careful order is of great necessity can be well shown by the number of voices utterly spoiled by the forced, hard tones on the notes produced by chest quality higher than they should be, or by the wretched poorness of those notes, unless the voice has been

most carefully organised, and the middle register rounded and strengthened by bringing down the good tones of the head-voice from Eb fourth space to F first space. I was most careful not to press my voice against the teeth, and to keep them well open, but tried always to let the sound rise straight up to the central part of the roof of the mouth—the natural “sounding-board,” that gives so much resonance and quality to the voice. With all the numerous pupils I had in later years I used the same production of tone, and it was certainly very successful, thanks to the care Sims Reeves took to make me understand his clever teaching.

After my *début* at St. Martin's Hall, I sang almost constantly at Mr. Hullah's oratorios and secular concerts, occasionally given, and became very friendly with him and his charming, clever wife, who had great talent as a pianist, and with his sons and daughters, the latter of whom I still often meet. At his musical evenings I met, among many clever and interesting people, Henry F. Chorley, the well-known musical critic of the *Athenæum*. The first notice he gave of my *début* is as follows:—

“We single out *The Messiah* as given at St. Martin's Hall from among the other Christmas performances of Handel's sacred oratorio, because of the new singers who appeared in it. Miss Palmer, the

contralto, has a sufficient voice, sang with steadiness, and had studied her task more deeply than many of the sisterhood. Her delivery of 'He was despised' was very good: the song being one of sorrow, and not what we have heard it made by other contralti, an utterance of despise and rejection."

I also insert a notice of *The Messiah* from the *John Bull* paper:—

"At the performances of the Sacred Harmonic and the London Sacred Harmonic Societies, the principal singers were the same that these societies usually employ. But Mr. Hullah brought forward two young performers of great promise who had not been previously heard in London. Miss Palmer, who sang the contralto part, appeared in public for the first time, and was, naturally, timid and nervous; but she acquitted herself, nevertheless, in such a manner as to obtain a highly favourable reception. All her airs were warmly applauded, and in 'He shall feed His flock' she was loudly encored. Her voice is a pure contralto of rich quality; she sings with perfect truth of intonation, and evinces intelligence and feeling. She has, in short, all the elements of an artiste, and with practice and experience cannot fail of success."

Henry F. Chorley wrote both the poetry and music of "When I was young," a song which I have constantly sung, and which has been always a great favourite; there is something natural and

quaint, too, about it, and people always like it. He wrote a pathetic song, "The Orphan," which is dedicated to me, but it is not so popular as the former-mentioned—"When I was young." His curious, high-pitched voice was very peculiar, and one evening at Mr. Hullah's we were talking about the great necessity of most careful use of the voice—good quality and proper phrasing, as well as the power and pure tone of the voice were needed in producing real success. "Ah, Miss Palmer, Miss Palmer!" exclaimed the clever critic, in his cracked, squeaky voice, "if I had only *two* notes in my voice, what a singer I would make!"

Not long after I first appeared at St. Martin's Hall I was offered the contralto part in the choir at Trinity Church, Bishop's Road, just opposite to Westbourne Terrace, and I sang there on Sundays for many years. When I first went Charles Edward Stephens was the organist, a nephew of "Kitty" Stephens, the celebrated soprano, who in 1838 married the Earl of Essex. C. E. Stephens was a very good musician, and played the organ very finely. After some years he left suddenly, owing to some disagreement with the Vicar. His post was filled by another very clever organist and musician, Edmund Chipp, who some years after went to Ely Cathedral. Miss Messent was the soprano, T. A. Wallworth bass, and Mr. Herbert

was tenor—a small but sweet voice—for a short time; but, unfortunately, I cannot remember the other tenor.

Charles E. Stephens I had known many years before I became professional. My father, mother, and I used to often visit Christopher Robson and his wife at Cambridge Terrace, Hyde Park, brother of Charles Robson, Frank's senior partner, and also of John Robson, who told my fortune when I was about sixteen. The Robsons always asked me to sing at their "evenings," and C. E. Stephens used to compliment me as a very clever amateur, little thinking that a few years later I should become a public singer, and a member afterwards of the Philharmonic Society, of which he became one of the Directors some years before my membership.

At Mr. Hullah's musical evenings I often met Sir Arthur Helps, the delightful writer of so many interesting books—*Friends in Council*, *Oulita*, *Realmah*, *Casimir Maremma*, etc.;—and used also to meet him and his sweet daughter Alice often at George Twynam Porter's. Mrs. G. T. Porter was a very interesting woman, but, unfortunately, did not live very many years. Sir Arthur Helps and his daughter were very fond of her, and Mr. Hullah's daughters too. We often all dined at her house during her lifetime.



In 1869 I was earnestly requested by the Committee of The Woman's Club—just started for the aid of governesses and others engaged in daily work—to appeal to the Queen, through Sir Arthur, for the donation of her Majesty's book, *Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands*, which was just out, and to beg for her Majesty's autograph written in it. I wrote to Sir Arthur, explaining as clearly as I could the great favour hoped for from the Queen, and received in answer the following letters from Sir Arthur Helps, who was then Private Court Secretary to her Majesty, and his daughter Alice:—

[PRIVATE.]

April 12, '69.

MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—I have written to the Queen, enclosing your letter, and backing your request. This between ourselves, for I do not know what answer H.M. will give. When I get the answer I will send it on to you.—Yours very sincerely,

ARTHUR HELPS.

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ARGYLE HOUSE,

ST. JAMES'S ROAD, CROYDON,

April 16th.

MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—Papa has desired me to write and tell you that he has submitted your petition about the book for The Woman's Club to

the Queen, and that he has heard from the Queen in reply to the effect that she would be very willing to give it, but that she has made it a *rule* not to give it to any institution but those which have been established for some little time. Papa thinks that that being the case, it will be best to wait for a little time and then apply. We shall be sure to bear it in mind, and apply at the earliest opportunity, as it would not be wise to urge the Queen to make an exception in this case from her general rule.

Only fancy, papa sent on your letter bodily !

It is very wonderful that we have not met lately at Mrs. Porter's, but I hear you are very busy just now.

I hope you have not the "July heat," and then this change to cold is trying. I should think you and the other nightingales must suffer somewhat !

Yours most sincerely,

ALICE HELPS.

Sir Arthur was very fond of music, and one evening, I think in 1868, I had promised to sing at a concert given at the Queen's Theatre, built on the spot where St. Martin's Hall was until most unfortunately it was burned down in 1860. I had promised to dine that evening at the Porters', to meet some friends, including Sir Arthur Helps. When he found I had to sing at this concert at the Queen's, he begged me to allow him to go with

me, that he might learn something of the theatrical arrangements, etc., as he was then writing a novel in which a professional heroine was the principal character, and he felt that seeing the stage, wings, and green-room would help him in some ways. The Porters lent us their carriage, which also waited to take us both home. A few days after Mrs. Porter sent me the following letter from Sir Arthur:—

*Saturday, 7th.*

MY DEAR MRS. PORTER,—I must tell you something which will amuse you. Your coachman seeing me accompany Miss Palmer, took it into his head that I was theatrical—probably a great singer, who was to accompany Miss Palmer not only in the carriage but in the trio!

Accordingly, when he put me down at my door he sidled up to me and said in a modest, whispering way: “Would you be so kind, sir, as to give me a horder for the theayter some day?” I held out hopes that I would—I ought to have said: “Certainly I will—the next time I sing there!” This will amuse your husband, and give him a good laugh.—Yours always,

A. H.

In 1869 poor Mrs. George T. Porter died, and a letter Sir Arthur wrote to her husband in 1870 is very interesting, both from alluding to his novel *Casi-*

*mir Maremma*, and his speaking of my dear young friend Sadie Williams's poem, which was of great importance to me, and also to her mother. He speaks, too, so touchingly of poor Mrs. Porter:—

February 18th, 1870.

MY DEAR PORTER,—I was much cheered by your kind letter anent my *Casimir*. I am afraid, though, yours is a very favourable view of it—much more favourable than the world in general will take.

I have given away lots of copies, and am almost ashamed to send to the publisher for more, else I would send one to our friend Miss Palmer. But I can't do so at present. Will you therefore lend her yours? I have a particular reason in asking you to do this. I have made use, good use I think, of two lines of poetry which I read in a volume of poems written by a friend of hers who died young; and Miss Palmer will perhaps be pleased to see how highly I estimate them.

Ah me! how true is what you say about your dear, good wife. What talk we should have had about *Casimir*—how she would have attacked me upon certain points!—not perhaps altogether perceiving that I was half in fun or in irony. Can't you hear her talking earnestly to me about these disputable points? No time for more. Lots of work as usual.—Yours ever,

ARTHUR HELPS.

In March 1875 I was dreadfully grieved to read in the newspaper that Sir Arthur had died rather suddenly on the 7th, through taking a severe chill at a Levee held by the then Prince of Wales, now our King Edward VII. Sir Arthur Helps was born July 10th, 1813. I regret much that I have no portrait of him.

## CHAPTER V.

AMONGST other well-known people I used to meet at John Hullah's house—a part of St. Martin's Hall—was Miss Masson, contralto, sister of Professor Masson. She was rather old, and had ceased to sing—was a clever, bright woman, and took great interest in me. One evening I was sitting by her side, chatting, when George Russell, a pupil of dear Mrs. Hullah (who played the piano extremely well), came in, and being asked to play, sat down and gave us the “Volkslied” and “Tarantelle” of Stephen Heller—two nice “bits” which Charles Hallé later on used to often play. Mr. Russell played delicately and with taste, and we both admired his style. A short time after Henry Deacon came in, and was also asked to favour us with a solo on the piano. To Miss Masson's and my amusement, he played the “Volkslied” and “Tarantelle” just given by George Russell! After she and I had smiled one to the other over the odd repetition of the same musical pieces, I asked her, “What do you think of Mr. Deacon's touch?” “Brilliant, but

bony!" said the clever woman in her somewhat stately manner. This was really very true, for Henry Deacon's style *was* brilliant, but hard and lacking in expression. Others I met at Hullah's were "Jimmy" Doyle, the clever artist on *Punch*, the Richmond artist family, Coleridges, Mr. Butterfield the architect, Holman Hunt, Dean Plumptre, and that most kind-hearted man the Rev. R. Maul, who preached for some years at the little church in Broad Court, Long Acre.

One evening in 1857 Mr. Hullah asked me if I would mind coming in the next morning to play an accompaniment for a young singer, strongly recommended to him by Henry F. Chorley; and as Mrs. Hullah, who always played the accompaniments for the chorus when rehearsing, was not at all well, I had done this for her during some time. Hullah wished to go to the farther end of the large hall, so as to judge of the *débutant's* power of voice,



CHARLES SANTLEY.

Photo by Watkins.

etc. As soon as I arrived, in good time, I read at sight that by no means easy-to-play air from Haydn's oratorio, *The Creation*, "Rolling in foaming billows." It was beautifully sung by the unknown singer, and his fresh young voice told out splendidly. It was Charles Santley. I always remembered this interesting meeting with great pleasure. Afterwards we often sang at the same concerts and oratorios, until in 1870 I "went in" for English operas, when of course I seldom could accept concert engagements; but from 1854 to 1870 I was constantly engaged for concerts and oratorios in London, and all the large towns in England, Scotland, and Ireland; also for many Festivals in Worcester, Birmingham, Bradford, and Norwich.

Frank (F. B. Franklyn), our old friend, was very intimate with Dr. Archibald Billing, the well-known and greatly esteemed physician, and introduced me to him long before I became professional; he most kindly prescribed for me whenever out of health. Some time after my *début* in 1854, I went to a musical party at his house, Grosvenor Gate, and heard Euphrosyne Parepa, afterwards Carl Rosa's wife, sing there. Some years after she sang at many concerts, and came out in English opera. Meeting me one night at a concert, she asked if I had any thought of going



in for English opera—she was sure, she added, that I should be very successful on the stage, as my singing was so dramatic even then. I told her it would delight me, extremely; and she spoke at once of her forthcoming visit to America, saying that when she returned she intended starting English opera at Drury Lane. She begged me to join any small English touring opera company while she was in America, that I might lose all nervousness in venturing on the stage. In those days the autumn seldom had concerts, and many tours were started then for English operas. I took her advice, and hearing of a small company starting at Banbury in August 1870, I joined it. Stanley Betjemann, cousin to Gilbert W. Betjemann, the well-known violinist (whose first appearance, when quite a young boy, I remember well at the Beaumont Institution in 1857), was the tenor; Richard Temple, so well known at the Savoy in recent years, was the baritone; and a sweet girl, Bessie Emmett, afterwards Mr. Temple's wife, was the soprano, with a very nice voice, who sang charmingly. Mr. Isidore de Solla was the conductor of the orchestra, and was very kind in giving me hints as to walking on the stage, etc. Later on I shall give an account of the first opera I sang in.

Just now I stated how Frank had introduced me to Dr. Archibald Billing, who was most kind

in always attending to me if affected by cold or coughs. His well-known cleverness as a specialist was most highly appreciated by both dramatic and musical great artists, and I never went to another doctor while he lived, for I always found his prescriptions successful. What a wonderful change was the treatment of invalids and patients in his days to the extraordinary thing supposed to be necessary for health in the days of William IV. and the earliest years of our dear Queen Victoria! My mother's first doctor after her marriage in October 1830 was a kindly, cheerful old man, Dr. Doubleday, yet he considered the torture of "bleeding" quite necessary, and I remember, when I was about five years old, going one morning into the dining-room—there sat my poor mother deadly pale, her head resting against Maria, our nurse, who stood behind her chair supporting her, while blood was rapidly pouring from her arm where the Doctor's lancet had (not for the first time!) punctured the vein just at the bend of the arm. Shrieking loudly, I rushed at him, caught at his coat-tails, and tried my best to drag him away, exclaiming, "You devil!—you devil! you're killing mamma!" Maria had to take me from the room, and I never forgot the horror of that day. That this dreadful way of ill-treating patients was of great harm to my mother I soon knew, when I

grew old enough to realise the cause of her constant weakness. Her nerves were never strong, and that is not wonderful when the dreadful physical weakness produced by the constant bleeding in her early life is considered. After some years, Dr. Bianchi, who married Dr. Doubleday's niece, became his successor, and attended my mother until her death in 1870, never carrying out the horrid old-fashioned style.

In 1871 I was introduced by Charles Durand (in whose English Opera Company I had entered) to Dr. George Bird, the well-known physician in the dramatic and musical world, and he was most kind and clever, attending to me constantly. Very soon I became quite friendly with him and his charming sister, Alice Bird—in whom I still have great interest—and regret sadly his death, though he was very old—eighty-three, for he was so kind to all his patients. When he became eighty in 1897 he gave up his profession, and on that birthday I wrote to congratulate him. The following is his answer, with his sister's additional short note :—

6 WINDMILL HILL,

HAMPSTEAD, N.W., *Sep.* 28.

MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—Thanks, many, for your friendly congratulations on my achieving 4-score

years. You must come and see us, and Alice will appoint a Sunday soon. Like you, we have been wandering among friends. Figuring it out, this is the 16th hospitable friend's house we have made a visit to.—Very truly yours,

G. BIRD.

Just for the present at Hindhead.

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HINDHEAD, *Sep.* 28.

DEAR MISS PALMER,—We have been ceaselessly on the wing, and all my friends are neglected. I find London visits difficult—so much to do when we are at Hampstead. When will you come—why not to lunch, 1.30 next Sunday? We can then have a nice talk. If lunch too early for you, then to tea.—Very truly yours,

ALICE L. BIRD.

We return home Oct. 1st.

Dr. Bird was so bright and talked so charmingly, always explaining things so vividly and distinctly. Although I suffered from eczema very badly when first I was introduced to him by Charles Durand, his prescriptions had a great effect on my illness, and I have constantly used them since, whenever the attack has come on. When I first knew him I lived in Park Village East, Regent's

Park—had lived there since 1860; and he strongly advised me to leave as soon as I could, on account of the dampness produced in my house by the canal, which ran at the back of the house, only separated by a very small garden from it. On the opposite side of the canal stood the Albany Street Barracks, with a large “yard” edged by a sloping bank between the barracks and the canal. One summer day I was sitting with my windows open, working a pair of slippers for my old friend Sims Reeves’s birthday in October, when I heard a moaning, which continued constantly. Looking at the gradual slanting bank just outside the large yard, where several of the invalids used to sit on the grass bank leading down to the canal, I speedily saw one of the married soldiers’ little boys, about eight years old, lying on the ground, and a young bear, which had been brought home by some of the soldiers from abroad, standing on the poor boy, and evidently biting his face or throat. I rushed into my garden, shrieking out to the soldiers sitting within a few yards of this horrid attack, and two or three of them ran immediately to the poor child and dragged the small bear away, carrying the boy into some part of the Barracks. I heard afterwards that he was removed to some hospital, and fortunately was saved from death. A few days after, the small bear was taken

to the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, so no other attack at the Barracks occurred.

Another stirring event took place one afternoon of a summer day, July 14th, 1887. Sitting quietly reading, I suddenly heard fearful shrieks, and ran down into the garden to try to find out what caused it. Children in the distance on the pathway by the canal were crying and shrieking, looking with terror at the canal. Then I saw a young man rush along the pathway and dash into the thick, muddy water. In very few minutes he rose with a small boy, and on landing him, rolled him over and over, till the child having recovered a little, was able to rise; then the young man walked with the boy and his little friends below the wall of my garden, intending to take the child to his home. As they passed I stopped them for a few moments, and told the brave young fellow I should write to the Royal Humane Society, trusting I should get a proper acknowledgment of his goodness in rescuing the poor little boy who fell into the canal by chance. He gave me a card bearing his name, George Morris, working as a jeweller at 7 Silver Street, Bloomsbury. I wrote at once to the Royal Humane Society, explaining the rescue of the child, and stating that many of the soldiers in the Albany Barracks would bear witness how true it was. Shortly

after came a parchment testimonial from the Society to me, which I got framed, then wrote to George Morris, asking him to come for it. I was so pleased to hear from him that he had rescued two children some time before—in Bristol, I fancy he said—and that the Society had awarded him at last the thoroughly-deserved testimonial. Poor fellow, he had taken a dreadful cold through going home in his wet clothes the day he rescued the boy, Henry Galvin, who was eleven years old, from the terrible fate of drowning. Often have I thought of the fine behaviour of the young man, and hoped that Providence has been faithful to him, giving him good fortune, which he thoroughly deserved.

## CHAPTER VI.

PARK VILLAGE EAST, in which I lived thirty-three years, was very charmingly arranged, with nice gardens (that were fine nursery-grounds years ago) both in front and behind the houses; so that in the spring and summer the place was very fascinating. Just after my father, mother, brother Robert, and myself went there in 1860 I made the acquaintance at a friend's house of a young girl aged twenty-three—Sadie Williams. Very soon our acquaintance deepened into real friendship, and she and I were very, very fond of each other until her sad and unexpected death so suddenly happened in April 1868. She asked her father—a Welshman, somewhat narrow-minded, though clever in his way—to let me visit them; but I, being a public singer, was too dreadful, in his idea, so he would not permit it! In 1861 she went to stay at Bangor with some relations, and wrote to me, begging me to go there for a change; and her description of Bangor being very delightful, I wrote saying if she could engage rooms for me near where she was staying I would come down for



a short stay only, having to sing at the Birmingham Festival in August that year. This brought me a most kind invitation from her cousin, Mr. John Price, and his wife, begging me to stay with them at the Normal College, Bangor, of which he was the headmaster, and I accepted it with pleasure.

Arrived there, I found to my regret that Sadie had to return home in two or three days, her father having just come down to take her back; and owing to this unexpected



BESSIE PALMER.

Photo by H. J. Whitlock.

separation—although, fortunately, Mr. Williams took a great fancy to me, inviting me to go to see him and his wife on my return to London—Sadie, on reaching home, sent me in her next letter a pathetic poem, which struck me as being very fine, so I wrote at once, begging her to tell me if she had written it herself, and any other poems. To my surprise and delight I found she

was always writing verses, though never speaking of or showing them to friends or relations. The poem I have just mentioned is as follows:—

I cannot speak, we grow so dumb with sorrow;  
 I cannot look, mine eyes are blind with tears;  
 I cannot say, "We meet again to-morrow;"  
 I cannot gaze along the weary years.

"Good-bye, good-bye," the autumn air is sighing,  
 The very flowers droop in sadness sweet;  
 Upon the hills a purple pall is lying,  
 The stealthy waves creep up unto my feet.

O cruel waves ! to bear away my gladness;  
 O steadfast rock ! to rest my hand upon;  
 O traitress heart ! to melt away in sadness;  
 O dazzling sunbeams ! would ye never shone !

O little bloom of fragile faithful heather !  
 Come, let me press my burning lips on you !  
 Come, teach me how to bear this stress of weather,  
 And give my parchèd tongue a sense of dew.

Mine eyes, my poor wet eyes are aching, aching,  
 The heavy tears lie scorching on my cheek;  
 My heart is hungry, weary—is it breaking ?  
 Good-bye, good-bye, I cannot, cannot speak !

On meeting Sadie at 95 Queen's Crescent, Haverstock Hill, her parents' house, after my return home, she showed me, at my earnest entreaty, many poems she had written, and I begged her

to send some to the *Argosy Magazine* and to the *Queen* newspaper. This led to the editors of both communicating with her, engaging her to write constantly for them. Sadie always declared it was through my great interest in her that she had this opening to Fame—poor girl, so soon to be lost! Her great love of music made her go constantly to concerts with me, and once she went to Drury Lane Theatre, to one of Howard Glover's concerts, at which I sang. At this affair he had Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony in F illustrated on the stage by groups of peasants quietly assembling during the first movement; then, when the storm music commenced, came thunder and lightning, while the crowds of juvenile and elderly peasants fled about to take shelter from the storm. Sadie, after going home, wrote me a letter describing this most amusingly. I insert that part of her letter:—

“There was such a funny affair before you came on. First appeared four gorgeous footmen, who were taken by part of the spectators for the ‘principal dancers, the Misses Gunniss,’ and cheered accordingly, which they bore with true ‘Jeames’s’ stolidity. Then the curtain drew up and disclosed a pastoral scene, minus the sheep and shepherds. Their place was abundantly filled by a company of lively young people expressing by their legs their joy at the

harvest, which did not seem to call for any particular rejoicing, as it consisted of three small bundles of straw; it had its advantages though, for not being at all fatigued they were able to strike up a spirited dance. This was interrupted by the arrival of a patriarch, who by comparison seemed to be about two hundred years old. He was welcomed by a burst of filial joy, which was the more creditable to the young people as he turned out an immense nuisance, having lost the use of his limbs and of his faculties generally, except that of kissing, which he retained with exaggerated vigour, submitting nine young women in succession to the osculatory process; others he rubbed on the head as though in the vigour of his early youth he might have been a purveyor of hair lotion. To add to the general rejoicing, a bird of the pigeon tribe, with a long, luminous tail like a comet's, reaching behind the stage, trilled forth his lay, as wonderful in art as it would have been in nature. The dancing being rather disturbed by the patriarch blundering about, it was evidently a relief to all parties when a thunder-storm came on, which was received with expressions of intense surprise, as being a phenomenon in harvest-time. There was a great display of filial zeal made in dragging the patriarch into the way of the lightning; when there he flopped down all of a heap; but, as might have been expected, having so little to lose, he was rather benefited by the shock,

and on being hoisted up raised his arms in a gymnastic attitude, which was accurately copied by all the rest, and maintained until the curtain fell! And this was—we looked at the bill to see—‘Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony!’ By-the-way, it has just occurred to me as a happy fact that I am nobody, or else this artless rendering of my impressions might be taken for what the boys call ‘a shy at the whole thing.’ Also I have the doubtful consolation that as, according to an old bad habit, the writing has been getting closer and closer, you may never get to the end of this story; so I may as well remain ‘arrested,’ as the French say.—Yours.”

This concert took place in January 1864, and in July 1865 she went to Paris with her father, sending me the following letter, very interesting in its description of the many charming places they explored:—

HOTEL DE NORMANDIE,

240 RUE ST. HONORE, PARIS,

*July 10th, 1865.*

MA BELLE,—I mean this to be a long letter, because it will probably be the only one. We propose staying till next Wednesday, but you had better write before Sunday, if you will.

We had a first-rate passage as to swiftness, and

I have a general impression that the sun shone and the wind blew, but I was not exactly in a condition for meteorological observations. It was very pleasant to see the red roofs of Calais standing out against the blue sky as we steamed up the long, quiet harbour. Directly we landed we could have told we were in France, not only by the loose-clad, blue-broidered *soldat*,



SADIE WILLIAMS.

clattering sabots, but by the universal gentle courtesy, the lingering, pleasant remnant of the old French chivalry. It is enough to be a woman here to have even Custom-house affairs in smiling subservience.

The country between Calais and Amiens is a long, flat stretch, lit up by silvery willows—something like the Essex marshes, only with a dark background of woods.

From Amiens to Paris is very fertile, like a huge market garden of vegetables and flax and purple poppies, which last they seem to grow very much—I suppose for the chemists or dyers. To English eyes there is just a little too much paternal government; even the forests are planted in rows, and the roads are absolutely mathematical. We passed Chantilly, the celebrated manufactory of lace, and St. Omer, the celebrated manufactory of priests;

also St. Denis, the tomb of the Kings of France; and a little white château, said to have been built in the sixth century by the mother of St. Louis, also called "La Reine Blanche," supposed author of "Partant pour la Syrie." All this we learned from a companion of ours, Calais to Paris, a Frenchman, one of those dreadfully sprightly travellers who will talk and make one answer till throat and head seem to want re-lining! We arrived on Friday night, and established ourselves in our old quarters of four years ago. They (the people of the hotel) had forgotten papa, naturally enough, but remembered me. Traddles may have helped them a bit, but some people have a wonderful memory for persons.

Mademoiselle, the daughter, is a charming little thing, about eighteen, with a thorough French aptitude for saying and doing just the right thing at the right time. There is a curious charm about their pretty speeches, just because they mean nothing, so that one's laziness is not disturbed by reciprocity.

The *table d'hôte* is interesting. People from all ends of the earth—one young bride and bridegroom, blushinglly anxious to avoid notice, and succeeding until—misguided young people!—they ordered a bottle of champagne, the cork of which went off like a young cannon, and turned five-and-forty startled pairs of eyes in their direction, including the shocked orbs of a mild young English curate, travelling with his "thithter"! There are some Russian girls here,



rather decidedly barbaric, smoking cigarettes, and eating fish with a knife ; but I fancy they would be counted unpolished specimens in their own country. There are some English here that I should not like to accept as examples of the veritable "Ours Britannique."

Saturday was spent at the Louvre. The building alone is a sight, and the rooms with their wealth of oak-carving and marble. There is one, the Salle d'Apollon, with walls and ceiling so covered with colour that it would be almost blinding if it did not end in a balcony overlooking the cool, quiet river Seine. We went out and had a view of the town across the river, with the domes of the Pantheon and the French Institute. We could see also the quaint, crowded "Ile de la cité," on which stands Notre Dame.

The bronzes and marbles are exquisite; several of the figures with the drapery in black marble and the flesh in white, transparent and veined ; also some tiny busts with silver drapery and onyx or Cornelian heads.

The china and glass are, of course, wonderful. There is one case of the works of Bernard Palissy, the peasant artist, who, in his poverty and enthusiasm, burned bit by bit his cottage furniture to keep alive the furnace which at last gave him success. There are here beautiful life-like figures by him, as well as the fishes and serpents which we have learned



to consider his distinguishing marks. The ivory-like china, which has lately been brought out as new, seems to have been made in France in the sixteenth century. Talking of ivory, there is a sort of altar-screen here, the finest I ever saw. It is about 7 feet square, covered with little figures, each standing out from the back, and about 3 inches high. It represents the life of Christ and of the two St. Johns, the patron saints of Charles VIII. (1416), and of his wife, by whom the work was given to some abbey. There are interesting relics here of all the Kings of France, from Clovis downwards—chiefly swords and missals, as though their life was made up of fighting and praying; not a bad life, if only they fought against evil within as well as without. We saw poor Marie Antoinette's splendid jewel cabinet, ivory fan, little worn silk shoe, and the last sad letter which she wrote, a prisoner, just before her execution. It is a singularly touching letter in its intense stillness, like the unflickering centre of a flame; her spirit is not broken, but petrified. Close to this letter is a large white silk coffret, presented to her by the city of Paris on the birth of the Dauphin. It is covered with painting and embroidery, representing angels and mortals rejoicing. Near by is an inlaid marble table, representing a map, which was designed by Louis XVI. for the education of that same Dauphin, who died of misery ten years after.

The Napoleon room contains an ivory ship presented by the city of Dieppe to Marie Louise on the birth of the King of Rome, who also outlived his father's greatness, though he died at sixteen. There is here the crown, said to have been Charlemagne's, which Napoleon I. was crowned in. It consists of bands of gold set with jewels rising to a cone over a velvet cap. Near it is the shabby felt hat which he, the dethroned Emperor, wore at St. Helena. It is something between a sermon and a poem to study this Napoleon room—the contrast between the golden souvenirs of the Emperor and the poor, worn, grey hair of the exile, cherished with such loving reverence by the nation.

There are delicious art treasures in another room—original pencil sketches by Rubens, Van Dyck, Dürer, Raffaele, Michael Angelo, and my first love, Leonardo da Vinci. Under the painted ceiling a live swallow was wheeling in distress; it had flown in at one of the windows, and, poor little birdie! seemed to be wondering what made the sky so hard and red. I should have been tempted to poetise him but for a vivid recollection of the Pickwickian "Ode to a perspiring frog." We had to leave the Louvre half done, so mean to give another day to the paintings. After dinner we went to the Tuileries, and saw either the Emperor and Empress or two guests of theirs walking in the private gardens: it was too dark to distinguish.

On Sunday we went to the Church of Saint Eustache, magnificent in its lofty roof and white carved columns. It was a grand Mass—wind instruments, bass viol, conductor with a prominent baton, and so on; but I have heard better music in Exeter Hall. In this, as in other things, Protestantism has obeyed, while Catholicism has ignored, Nature's great law of progress; so that we have now caught and passed them even in their strong points of music and decoration. Some of this last in St. Eustache, as in the other churches, is tawdry and tasteless—rubbishy artificial flowers in Lowther Arcade vases, and guttering candles making a mess. In the old days, when light was precious, a candle might have been an acceptable offering, but now it is simply nasty; sizes and prices according to the means of the worshippers. Yesterday we “did” the Palais Royale and part of the Boulevards; saw some parasols made of swan's-down, with tiny stuffed birds on the top; bought some really good eau-de-Cologne—bottle each, mamma, you, and I—papa's present; so you need not scold—Yours ever lovingly,

SADIE.



SADIE WILLIAMS.

Photo by Clarkington &amp; Co.

In 1865 Sadie wrote me a very lovely poem on my birthday, and it is so poetical that I insert it. She was so passionately attached to me, she was constantly sending or bringing me charming and useful presents, besides the very interesting letters she so often wrote me. When we first met she begged me to give her singing lessons, but I soon found that she was too weak in the chest to be able to practise, and I therefore strongly advised her to give up taking lessons, which advice she accepted and scarcely ever tried to sing, as she knew her voice was too weak to give pleasure to many hearers. But sometimes she would write and beg me to let her come for a lesson, and then when she arrived would entreat me to sing various songs to her instead of trying to do so herself.

#### BESSIE'S BIRTHDAY.

Wake her not, on this her birthday morning,  
Let her sleep—dear dreamer, sleep and dream;  
Thou and I, O lute ! will watch beside her,  
Guard her from the daylight's waking gleam.

Lying thus, in Nature's soft Elysium,  
What of bliss she gathers none can tell;  
Silence then, for us, mine old companion,  
Lest our murmurings should break the spell.

Only listen, while I softly tell thee :  
Birthday blessings I would give my sweet,

Brightest joys should gently light upon her,  
Fairest flowers spring around her feet.

Not a cloud should dim her clear horizon,  
Not a sorrow shade her gentle eyes,  
Yet what sayest thou, lute, with solemn music?  
“Out of discords harmonies arise :

“Eyes that weep not know no tender shining,  
Hearts that never ache lose sense of rest ;  
What she is—is what her life has made her,  
Only God can give her what is best.”

Be it so, I'll pray Him for my darling,  
Pray to God to keep her day by day :  
By mine own poor love, I know he loveth,  
Bless her, Thou, O God, I humbly pray.

*August 9th, 1865.*

I also insert a Christmas poem Sadie sent me  
just before Christmas Day, 1865 :—

#### A CHRISTMAS WREATH.

What shall I bring her? my love, my sweet ;  
How shall I weave her a garland?  
Greenest of rushes should strew her feet,—  
What shall I cull for her crowning?

Mistletoe groweth a ghostly thing  
Neither in earth nor in heaven;  
Ivy is torn whence it fain would cling,  
Rootlet and tentacle riven.

Holly leaves end in a piercing thorn;  
Berries?—Ah ! what say the legends ?  
“Crimson drops, they ; since the crown was worn  
Wounding the brow of the Just One.”

What shall I cull her, the time to suit ?  
These are such sorrowful garlands ;  
Laurel is poison, they say, at the root ;  
Bay scarcely grows in a life-time.

Cypress and yew-boughs ? Ah no ! ah no !  
Hasten not, day, in thy dawning ;  
Let me not lose her, not so, not so ;  
Let us live on till the morning.

What shall I cull then ? for her, my Queen,  
Is there no joy without sorrow ?  
Must there be crimson to fleck the green ?  
Thorns in the evergreen chaplet ?

Let it be so, then, and if we be  
Torn from the wall, like the ivy ;  
Mistletoe-like, from an earth root free,  
We will stretch upwards to Heaven.

—SADIE, *Xmas*, 1865.

Sadie took a great fancy to my brother's first child, Robert Mansbridge Palmer, who was called Bertie, and in her letters to various friends, also to the editors of many magazines and newspapers she wrote for, often told them curious little anecdotes of the child. I insert part of a letter alluding to

Bertie (he was about four years old), also a poem she wrote about him :—

“ Her song ‘Gathering Heartsease’ [speaking of my composition] is dedicated to me, and my little book, *Rainbows in Spring*, is dedicated to her nephew Bertie; such a lovable child, especially when he is naughty. The other day, for some misdemeanour, he was dismissed from the dinner-table by his mamma. Bertie finding himself landed with his little plate in the bedroom, not unnaturally objected, remonstrating through the keyhole: ‘I can’t eat my dinner in here; a bedroom isn’t the proper place to eat dinners in; I won’t have my dinner here.’ ‘Then you will go without,’ said the mother. ‘Very well,’ said Bertie resignedly; ‘then I shan’t have my dinner, and then I shall be ill, and then I shall die; and when I am dead I will fetch a policeman, and you shall be hanged.’

“A tolerable notion of climacteric oratory for a child of four years old. But Bertie has his tender moods when he comes to his aunt, saying, ‘Auntie Bessie, kiss me as though you loved me!’”

#### BERTIE.

Bertie is tender, and fair, and small,  
Is not a masculine boy at all;  
Only his eyes are so earnest and blue,  
Only his lips are so wise and true,  
Only he is my darling.

Bertie and I were taking a walk,  
 Well entertained with a sober talk—  
 For Bertie was three years old that day—  
 Rather bewildered, but full of play,  
   Because he had a birthday.

Under the cherry-tree, white with bloom,  
 Then in the house to the music-room,  
 Where he lay down, and said, "Auntie, play,"  
 And I, what could I do, but obey?  
   Because it was his birthday.

Somehow a hymn-tune ran on the keys,  
 "Auntie, it's like the wind in the trees ;  
 God made the wind—I'll see Him some day  
 When I grow up."—"Ay, love, we will pray  
   To God to bless my Bertie."

"When I grow up, I'll see Him, I know;"  
 "No darling ; but when you die, and go  
 To heaven"—"Auntie, that's what I mean;  
 That *is* growing up."—"Ah ! sweet, I ween  
   God tells thee more than I can."  
   —SADIE.

In October 1866 Sadie had the charming little book published by Routledge & Sons called *Rainbows in Springtide*, of which she speaks in the letter just quoted as dedicated to Bertie, and as she sent a copy of the book to the Rev. E. H. Plumptre, M.A., the late Dean of Wells, he was very charmed with the "pleasant ease and genial insight into



child-nature, enlivened here and there with touches of quaint humour and vivid description " (this written by the Dean in his memoir of poor Sadie). Through an introduction to her by letter, he discovered that she had been his pupil sixteen years before 1866, at the Queen's College, Harley Street, and had left in consequence of illness, being very delicate. But she continued reading and thinking for herself in a quiet way, scarcely coming into "society" until this introduction to the Dean. He invited her often to his house in Gloucester Road, Regent's Park, and Sadie having talked of me to him and Mrs. Plumptre, I, too, was frequently invited there to musical evenings. There it was I first met George Macdonald, the interesting writer and wonderfully handsome man, author of *Robert Faulkner*, *Alec Forbes*, *Unspoken Sermons*, *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*, and many well-known poems and novels. I also met there Lady Thompson (Kate Loder), the wife of the celebrated medical man, Sir Henry Thompson; the Chevalier Bunsen, Rev. H. R. Haweis, and E. Maurice, brother of Mrs. Plumptre. When I first went to Bordighera, one winter, about 1893, I was delighted to hear that George Macdonald, with his wife and family, was living there, and I went often to see him. There I had the great pleasure of first meeting Mrs. Godwin, Mrs. Macdonald's very clever

and charming sister—a most delightful and sympathetic woman, whom I met again in the year 1901 at Bordighera.

Sadie wrote many prose articles for the *Queen* newspaper, as well as for the *Argosy*, besides a number of poems which were published in both these publications, and also in the *Day of Rest*. Some of her sacred poems were very beautiful. They were issued in a book she had prepared for Mr. Alexander Strahan to publish, entitled *Firelight Hours: a Legacy of Verse*—this last phrase added by the Dean of Wells.

In August 1866 she wrote a pathetic poem on my birthday, which seemed to foretell the sad ending of her life. I add it to the many I have already given:—

BESSIE'S BIRTHDAY, 1866.

Sweet, my love is growing older,  
Growing past poetic youth,  
Will not trip in dainty measure,  
Forfeits grace for force and truth.  
Will you so accept it, dearest?  
Take my benison in prose,  
Rest you by my shaded ingle,  
Where the homely firelight glows;  
While the shadows, leaping, falling,  
Mark our labour and repose.  
Soft and slow, as sunset darkness

Creeps along a mountain-side,  
So the birthdays rise behind us,  
While towards the night we glide,  
Glide towards the Great Reposing,  
While the soul, that wearied dove,  
Finds that as the shades grow deeper,  
Clearer shine the stars above.  
And the star that cheers the evening  
Crowns the morning, and is love.

—SADIE.

Venus, you know, *mia bella*, is both the evening and the morning star.

Her letter to me December 27th, 1866, has a clever imitation of Longfellow's "Psalm of Life," so I give the whole :—

*December 27th.*

MY DARLING,—“A Happy New Year to you.” I could not well write yesterday. On Christmas night Mamma had one of her inflammatory attacks. She is better now, quite bonnie; but I was up with her till two o'clock in the morning. Had to be at Mr. Richardson's by eleven, getting the three teeth stopped; just home from there when Mr. Plumptre came to talk over the *Queen* poems for the volume. He likes them all except “Phyllis's Courtship.” I put that in for fun, but he wouldn't be shocked to oblige me; he certainly is venerable in the old high sense, for the simplicity of goodness that makes him “wear his weight of learning like

a flower." Next came Mrs. Pearce, and then letters. There is to be another notice of *Rainbows*, the last, on January 1st, in the *Beau Monde*. I will send it if it comes.

Bunny had a dismal Christmas, badgered and baited at home; it is a great shame. Mr. Morgan is at home ill with bronchitis. We were very happy, had a lot of music; my voice came back all of a sudden, quite a bellow, but dumb in the upper G. If it lasts I should like a lesson about the week after next. Next week everybody is coming to spend the day. I am all to pieces now, of course.

Love and kisses to Mamma and Bertie.

Ever your own

SADIE.

### THE ROSE OF LIFE.

(From Longfellow.)

*What the heart of the old man said to the poet.*

Tell me not in tuneful numbers  
Life is like the poet's dream,  
For the soul is blest that slumbers,  
Things are harder than they seem.

Life is terribly in earnest,  
Not so certain is its goal.  
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"  
May be true of many a soul.

Well we know nor joy nor sorrow  
Is our destined end or way,

That no glorious to-morrow  
Springs from commonplace to-day.

Wives of great men all remind us,  
Nought can make their lives sublime,  
And the friends we leave behind us  
May forget our faults in time.

Faults, it may be, that another  
Drifting o'er Life's foggy main;  
Some poor puzzle-headed brother  
May revive to light again.

Let us then, no downfall rueing,  
Learn to grin and bear our fate,  
Ignisfatuis pursuing  
Some must run, and some must wait.

—SADIE, *December 25th*, 1866.

All 1867 Sadie was very much occupied writing many poems, and fully intending to publish a volume herself the next year, which, alas! did not happen. In November she wrote me the following letter:—

*Friday evening, November 1867.*

MY DARLING,—Do come to-morrow to tea, and tell me what you think of the enclosed MS. It is a spare copy, I don't want it back; never mind whether the knee-caps come or not. Mamma, judging by my exploits in the knitting line, does not expect them till Xmas. Thank you so much for

getting them at all. If you cannot possibly come tomorrow, come on Tuesday. It does seem, as you say, so long since we saw one another (last week, was it not?) that I was driven to dreaming of you last night; thought that you had set "Andromache" to such a lovely tune!

We could not go to Mr. Macdonald's lecture; Mamma was afraid of the wet. So I wrote to his wife, and she is coming here on Wednesday. There seems to be an invasion of the Picts just now: Miss Strahan came on Friday to spend the day, and I blundered out that we didn't expect her, but kept her of course; she is so nice, I like her, but could not agree to call on her friends. Georgina S—— has turned up again, after three years' silence, and sent me a broken idol from Candia, and a shell from Mars Hill, Athens. I do wish people wouldn't come to life again in this way—it is impossible to gossip with a Ghoul! There is a grand *émeute* at the Museum again; some man has been writing to the *Times* that people go there "what shouldn't"—so the Countess told me. She and the Count took me down to dinner like a small child. It is great nonsense; I believe some people enjoy these small fusses! Nobody ever looks civilly at me there, I can certify; nor uncivilly neither. I have not seen Bunny; but she writes in better spirits, and such a blow ought to do her good artistically.

Have you seen the "Talmud" in the October

*Quarterly?* It is the greatest treat I have had for a long time, and it is by Arthur Helps! So Dr. Rowden tells me—he is his physician, so Mamma understood, but she is not a model of correct understanding. If so, things do come out queerly. He, Arthur Helps, is almost my idol just now. Dr. Rowden says he has even made a readable book of the Queen's Highland wanderings. Best love to Mamma and you—mine own self as always your loving

TRADDLES.

I must just insert a charming little poem poor dear Sadie sent me one Christmas :—

CHRISTMAS, 1864.

Sweet, remember, that I love you always,

Only thus I ask you, think of me.

Yet remember, love doth feed on loving,

And can either starved or nourished be.

—SADIE.

In December 1867, towards the end, her father became ill, and died in January 1868, of typhoid fever. Poor dear Sadie was suffering from pain in the breast, and Dr. Rowden, who had attended her father during his illness, advised her to apply iodine to it. After her father's death, her mother and she intended to go for a year to Bangor, and took a pretty little house, which was painted afresh

for them. One bedroom door had my name—"Bessie's room"—painted over it, as Sadie wished it to be considered my special room, and I was invited to go and stay with them as long as I could in the summer. In April I went to Brighton to stay with my friend Miss Jane Bramwell, and on Sunday morning, April 19th, a letter came from poor Sadie, dated April 18th, telling me that by the time I received her note she would have gone through an operation, as Dr. Rowden had begged her to consult Campbell de Morgan, the celebrated operator for cancer, and head surgeon at Middlesex Hospital, who had told her frankly that it was undoubtedly the only chance she had of recovering, should the operation be successful. I was horrified at such terrible news, and returned home that evening. The next morning, early, I went to Queen's Crescent, Haverstock Hill, where Mrs. Williams still remained, and saw the poor dear girl scarcely alive. Every day that week I went to sit with her for a time, seeing each day that poor dear Sadie was gradually sinking, and on the Saturday, April 25th, after saying, "Mother dear, take care of Bessie," she passed away. The poor unhappy mother fainted, and remained unconscious for a long time. When recovering she exclaimed, "Take care of Bessie," which the kind-hearted woman never ceased to carry out.



Just a few months before poor Sadie's death she had gathered a number of poems together, about which she constantly consulted me, and they were to be published with the title of "Twilight Hours," by Strahan & Co. But this terrible operation taking poor Sadie from us so suddenly, deferred the publication of her poems for several months, until the November of that year; and the Rev. E. H. Plumptre wrote a very interesting memoir of her at the commencement of the book. While Sadie was preparing for the year's visit to Bangor in 1868, she wrote the following poem as a farewell to London, but the sad event that happened on April 25th made it an absolute farewell to all her friends too. When she had written it she asked my father to get it printed for her, which he did.

LONDON, APRIL 1868.

City of many sorrows, fare-thee-well,  
Clasped in thy dusky arms, dear comrades dwell.  
Comfort them, Mother, keep thou them this night;  
Breathe on them softly, let their cares lie light,  
And if they feel me watching through their sleep,  
Let them not see mine eyes as those that weep;  
Let me not bring to them one thought of pain,  
But calmly pass, like some far distant strain  
Of rugged music, borne on summer wind,  
God's air between us—discords all refined  
To subtlest harmonies, while halting speech,

Grown inarticulate, doth deeper reach.  
Tell them, O Mother City, monitress,  
That not defect of love, but love's excess,  
Doth hold me quiet now, doth still my heart,  
And teach me that true lovers never part.

—SADIE.

Dear Mrs. Williams was always anxious to see me, for we talked so constantly together about dear Sadie, her lost, beloved daughter, and we were most closely united until separated by her death, September 14th, 1886. Long before she was taken from me she had said I was to write instantly to her lawyer, Mr. R. Knight, when she died, and that I should find she had left me enough to live upon, so that I need not work any longer; and it was quite true. Thus life has become a great rest to me ever since poor Mrs. Williams's death—as I used to teach singing regularly every late autumn in Newcastle-on-Tyne from 1877, having many friends living there. Up to 1886 I continued giving lessons, and during the last three months I devoted to the teaching I actually gave 472 lessons! But when I found that the generous legacy left to me by my dear, kind old friend Mrs. Williams was sufficient to relieve me from working any longer, I gave up all lessons and engagements; since then I have sung in public only for charities. This most kind legacy, curiously enough, was pre-

dicted by John Robson, in his "fortune-telling" from examining my palm in 1846, though when I first knew dear Sadie and her mother I had not the slightest idea of such a true prediction, having quite forgotten what John Robson had foretold.

## CHAPTER VII.

IN 1856, about the beginning of September, I started on a tour of nine weeks with Madame Rudersdorff. The other members were George Perren, a favourite tenor, especially in ballads;



*H. Molique*

Lewis Thomas, the basso, who appeared at St. Martin's Hall in the *Messiah* for the first time in London the same night as myself; Herr Molique, the wonderfully clever violinist and refined composer of charming songs and compositions; and Alberto Randegger, a clever composer and pianist, also a good accompanist. George Perren

was very fond of fun; often he made me laugh heartily at his droll ways when we were travelling on the railways. Sometimes one or two of the gentlemen preferred to travel for a

time in a smoking carriage, and then if George Perren saw a chance of some stranger coming to take a seat in our carriage, he would suddenly place on his nose a champagne-bottle cork painted scarlet, and arranged to fit on in an effective but terribly comic way. People on the verge of entering drew back, horrified at the singularly-nosed gentleman who pressed forward to the window as the entering passenger came to the door. Once an old lady got in as Perren happened to be away, and when he entered the carriage he peered about looking under the seats, saying to Madame Rudersdorff and me, "Where *can* those leeches have gone to? I cannot see them anywhere." This alarmed the old lady, and she quickly changed to another carriage. George Perren used to say, if I complained of the slowness often shown by the train, "This is an *express* train, *expressly* made to go slowly." And dear old Herr Molique, after hearing him say this very often, taught me how to repeat it in German: "Dieser ist ein Schnellzug, besonders gemacht langsam zu gehen." So when George Perren commenced "This is an *express*," etc., I also expressed it in German, much to the amusement of our party. Mr. Perren had great natural talent for drawing and painting, and I have several charming little sketches and a very interesting landscape in oil-painting by him which

he gave me. He painted the landscape in 1900, and I treasure it as a sign of the constant love for the two sister arts, music and painting, developing itself so easily and very often in the mingled talents of musical artists.

After the tour was finished, Herr Molique often



MR. GEORGE PERREN.

asked me to sing at some of his concerts, and I find in the remaining diaries (many lost) the following dates:—July 1st, 1859, at Willis's Rooms, when I sang a very elegant song of Alberto Randegger's, "To thee, my love," and a charming one of Herr Molique's,

"The Nightingale." From September 17th to 21st, 1860, I sang at the Norwich Festival. On Thursday morning, 19th, Herr Molique's fine oratorio, *Abraham*, was given, and I sang it with great interest. In the evening *Undine*, Benedict's graceful and charming cantata, was very effective, and my song, "The Baron's Old

Castle," also successful. Madame Clara Novello, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Weiss sang in it too. Dear Herr Molique was very pleased with me in singing his clever oratorio, and also with what I sang in *Undine*. On June 11th, 1861, I sang for him at Hanover Square Rooms, and one song I gave was "I arise from dreams of thee," words by Shelley, music by George A. Macfarren, composer of many operas—*Jessy Lea*, *A Soldier's Legacy*, and above all, *Robin Hood*. In this latter Mr. Sims Reeves sang the title part, the opera being produced for the first time at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1860; afterwards, about 1872, it was brought out at the Crystal Palace, Robin Hood being sung by Mr. Nordblom, Maid Marian by Blanche Cole, while I sang the small part of Alice. I think by that time—or soon after—the composer had become Sir George Macfarren. The next day after the concert he wrote me the following letter, written when the poor man was almost completely blind, and I had the greatest difficulty in reading it:—

11 ALPHA ROAD, N.W.,

12th June 1861.

MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—I cannot forego the pleasure of telling you how delighted I was with your singing of my song last night. It has never

been my good fortune to hear you sing anything like this, as I was ill with complications when I went to previous performances; and I am sure there were many present whose good opinions you would seek, and who must long recollect the gratification you gave them.

I am no dreamer, or I should certainly have "arisen from dreams of thee" this morning.

Sincerely yours,

G. A. MACFARREN.

Please think of letting me have "King Charles" when you have done with him. Should you ever sing that song again, think, please, whether or not it might not be still more effective were you to take what precedes "The wandering airs" a lit—tle slower without changing one inflection of the voice or altering reading in any other way whatever. Mind, only a lit—tle!

The letter is most interesting to me, showing that Mr. Macfarren liked my way of singing his song, although I had not quite carried out his own idea of slackening the time at that particular bar; but afterwards I did sing a few bars preceding "The wandering airs" slower, and found the effect *was* improved.

In referring to the concerts of Herr Molique, I find I sang at his on May 30th, 1865, at the



Marquis of Townshend's house, and also at Herr Molique's farewell concert, May 3rd, 1866, at St. James's Hall. On May 8th he returned with his family to Germany; and on May 10th, 1869, his devoted wife and daughters suffered from the sad loss of their talented, kind-hearted husband and father. While he lived in Harrington Square, Hampstead Road, I was introduced one evening to Mr. and Mrs. John Augustus Tulk, the most handsome couple I ever met, and so kind and interesting. Very soon I became very intimate with this charming pair, going often to stay with them when they lived in Isleworth, afterwards in Twickenham, and lastly I stayed with them in the picturesque and most interesting house Mr. Tulk bought in Chertsey—Cowley House—where Abraham Cowley, the poet of Charles I. and Charles II.'s reign, had lived. The old part of the house was in capital order, and the staircase fascinated me so much that I felt I must take a water-colour sketch of it, which interests all who see it. Many times when I stayed for some months, of late years, in Mentone, I often went to see these friends at other Italian towns—Bordighera, San Remo; and last of all, in 1896, while staying at my favourite hotel, Windsor Palace, Mentone, I went to Beaulieu to see them, poor Mr. Tulk having been ill before leaving

England. Later on, March 13th, the unhappy news came that my dear old friend had passed away; but his dear wife I still have the happiness of seeing sometimes at Cowley House; she also visits me here in my cosy flat in Chelsea.

In after-years I had the pleasure of meeting Sir George Macfarren and Lady Macfarren often at Miss Macirone's musical parties, and often sang in many very clever madrigals, quartets, etc., composed by Miss Macirone, whose name was well known as a clever composer of vocal music. Her sister Emily had talent as a painter, and I have the pleasure of possessing a charming sketch of hers. I sang a fine song of her sister's—words by Tennyson, "Charge of the Light Brigade"—which was very effective. Once when I sang it at a concert in Norwich, it was tremendously encored. While I lived in Park Village East, I had the great pleasure of seeing the two sisters very often after I had met them in 1871 at Mrs. Galbraith's meetings; but since I left for Cheyne Court in 1893, I have seldom had the delight of seeing Clara Macirone, her sister having died in February 1888, to my regret.

At Mrs. Galbraith's, too, I had the pleasure of first meeting Lilly von Kornatzki, a clever pianist, whom I still have the happy chance of seeing

since her marriage with a very good violinist, Mr. Henry Saint-George.

At the end of 1872 I received the following letter from Sir G. A. Macfarren, dictated by him to his attendant, as the poor man was quite blind then:—

7 HAMILTON TERRACE, N.W.,

Dec. 31st, 1872.

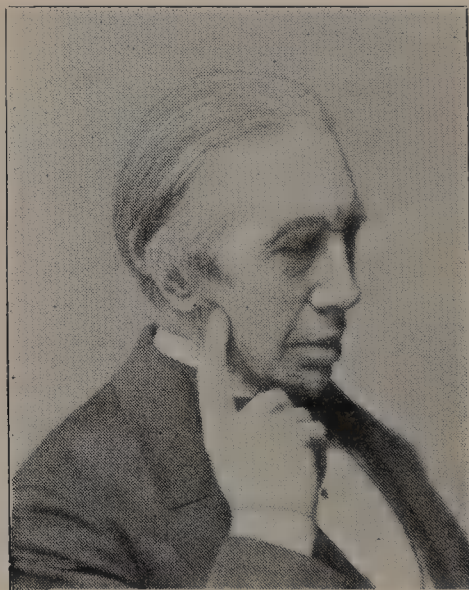
MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—Let me wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year. I send you my two operas (*Jessy Lea* and *A Soldier's Legacy*), in which are parts that would suit you vocally and give you something to act—not quite in the expectation that you may have opportunity to play them, for I know this must depend as much on others as on yourself, but to show you that I have done things which may fit you better than the little part in *Robin Hood* [which I played at the Crystal Palace that year]. Please to receive them as compliments of the season. Let me thank you for your statistical reply to my note—it was just what was wanted.—Faithfully yours,

(For G. A. MACFARREN) A. F. B.

The photograph of Sir George Macfarren was kindly given to me by Lady Macfarren when I told her I was writing my life, and should hope to

give photos of the distinguished artists and composers I had known during my lifetime.

At many concerts, before I began singing in operas in August 1870, I had the great pleasure of constantly meeting Miss Poole (Mrs. Bacon then), the celebrated ballad-singer, who also had sung for



SIR GEORGE MACFARREN, MUS. DOC.

Photo by Window & Grove.

years in English operas—many of Sir George Macfarren's, Balfe's *Bohemian Girl*, in which she played the Gipsy Queen, that she sang with great success, especially the song Balfe wrote for her, "'Tis gone! the past was all a dream," a song

which was transposed lower for me when I played the same part, years after her, and was also a great favourite, being always encored. Miss Poole used to sing "Wapping Old Stairs" in a most delightful simple way, and it was a great favourite with the public. She went on a tour with the well-known

Clara Novello, and afterwards with her sister, Sabilla Novello, both of whom were most kind and attentive to my friend. We two used often to sing at the dinners given by the many Companies in the City, and at the Lord Mayor's and Guildhall meetings. We always felt glad to meet each other, but when I started singing in English operas I lost all chance of meeting Miss Poole, and it was only recently, July 1900, that I had the great delight of renewing our old friendship. She had retired many years, but is still as fond of music, so genial and kind-hearted, that it was an immense pleasure to me to meet her again after so many years' separation. I introduce two kindly letters of hers—the first in answer to one I wrote her, having found that she was present at a meeting when Dr. W. H. Cummings was presented with robes on receiving the Mus. Doc. title:—

LANGLEY, BUCKS,

*July 27th, 1900.*

MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—Is it possible you are the *same* Miss Palmer? I *am* glad, and shall be so delighted to see you again. I am living at the old country place; I was only visiting Hampstead when you wrote, and I am going on Monday next to visit some friends at Hindshead in Surrey. You will think I am a “gay young thing”; I begin to think

I am! I was eighty the 5th of last April, and yet I go to town alone and back again, transact my own business without the slightest inconvenience or fatigue, for which I am most thankful. On my return from my visit I go to Felixstowe in Suffolk, where my daughter and her family are now staying. The cottage is close to the sea, really on the beach. We go every year, and you will be surprised to hear I have my "dip" before breakfast—please don't laugh!

But we must meet, and we shall have so much to remember and talk about. Let me know, if you leave town, where you are.—And believe me always sincerely yours,

ELIZABETH POOLE-BACON.

In 1867 Miss Poole went on a tour with Sims Reeves, and she has often told me how kind and genial his manners were to her, so that she thoroughly enjoyed the touring.

I regret to say that a sad accident occurred to my dear friend some time ago. On October 17th, 1901, I had a letter from her, which follows here:—

BATH COTTAGES, FELIXSTOWE,

*October 17th, 1901.*

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND BESSIE,—You are good to be so interested in this poor old soul. Am I not unfortunate? On the 8th of this month I slipped on

the oilcloth in the breakfast-room; fell on my left side, and hurt myself awfully. I fainted, and have kept my bed ever since, but hope soon to be better. I am so glad I found your paper, *The Stage*, only yesterday, and send it to you with this post. We shall remain here, I think, a week longer. You are happy, I'm sure, in your visits, and do write and tell this poor cripple all about yourself, you dear.

Mrs. Turner and Dolly returned home to Langley yesterday. Mrs. Turner is better, but uncertain in her health.—Believe me, as ever, your affectionate old friend,

ELIZABETH BACON.

Of course, I have constantly written and inquired about dear Mrs. Bacon, and in February 1902 I heard that she was certainly improving, but unable to walk without crutches, and generally going out in a basket-chair. She sent me a photo of herself taken by her grandson, she standing just outside the cottage door leading into the garden at Felixstowe, supported by her crutches. It is a very good likeness of her sweet face, but of too light a tone for reproduction. Till this month (June) I have had cheering letters from her, and on the 11th she wrote to ask me if I could go down and spend a day with her, and fixed a day; but, unfortunately, the constant wet weather we have had all this spring prevented

me from going to Langley. On the 17th June 1902 I heard from my dear old friend's granddaughter, Madeleine Turner, the sad news that her grandmother had just had a dreadful fall again, and the doctor said she had broken a rib. Still the weather was so bad I could not go that week to see her, though she entreated me, through her granddaughter, to go at once; but I had promised to sing after the banquet of the Society for Encouragement of Fine Arts on the 19th, so could not venture away from home till the evening was over. I must say it was a most successful affair for me, as well as for Madame Wilson Osman, Mr. Vivian Bennetts, and Miss Frances Simpson, the accompanist. A charming speech was made by Philip H. Newman, the hon. secretary, thanking me for my kindness in singing for the Society, and the next day I received a letter from the Council—most complimentary.

All the next two weeks the weather was so bad I dared not go to Langley; but on the 30th June it was warm and fairly fine, so I started at 11.40, and was most delighted on arriving at Langley to find my dear friend Mrs. Bacon really fairly well, though not completely. Since then I have had good news of her health, and I am hoping she will quite recover now. I asked her many questions in one of my letters about the most early part of her



career, and she wrote me the following interesting items:—

“ I appeared at the Olympic Theatre when I was six years old—sang ‘ Oysters, sir?’ in character, in a pantomime. The theatre belonged to an old friend of my father. My sisters wished me to sing in the pantomime as I used to sing on the dining-room table. My father declared, before a child of his should sing in a theatre he would cut her legs off! This was, I think, in 1826; I was six years old. He little thought I should spend so much of my life in a theatre. When I was nine years old I sang at Lucombe’s Library, on the Stein at Brighton, with Priscilla Horton. She stood on a pair of steps at the side of a table; I stood *on the table*; I was a little thing for my age. I had just been articled for seven years to a Mr. J. T. Harris, a chorus-master at Drury Lane Theatre. He taught me my parts, and took half my salary for so doing. I had never less than nine pounds a week. When he died I thought I should be obliged to sing in the choruses, as I was taught to believe I was only fit to do so without him; but my dear old friend Mr. Bunn sent for me, and told me he would engage me, which he did season after season, I singing such parts as Elvira in *Don Giovanni*. I was many seasons at Drury Lane Theatre, which was the school for all I learned. The conductors were—Tom Cook, Schira, Benedict, Vincent Wallace, etc. I had a good study, and

worked very hard. Sir Henry Bishop was one of the conductors in Wallace's opera, *Maritana*. I sang a solo—'Alas! those chimes,' with many encores. I have often been asked who taught me to produce my voice. My reply was: Malibran, Mrs. Wood, Grisi, Trebelli—and rich, fine voices gave me the wish to imitate them. I sang in Balfe's opera, *The Maid of Artois*, with Malibran nightly. And I remember singing at a Festival in Norwich with Mario and Grisi, and at another one with Madame Caradori Allen. At the rehearsal she refused to sing 'Rejoice greatly' unless the band lowered the tone. Imagine the difficulty at a short notice! The conductor, Benedict, in despair, asked if I would sing it. I did; had great applause from all, and thanks from Benedict. Shortly after that I sang all the soprano parts in the *Messiah*, with Sims Reeves. You see what a varied line of business mine has been!"

Really, I find that my "line of business" has been greatly varied too! Mrs. Bacon's dear friendship for me makes my life very happy, and it is always a charming time when I go to see her at Langley. Unfortunately she is not strong enough since the unhappy falls to be able to come and see me; but this year (1904) I have been to see her several times, and find her better than last year, though still unable to walk without a crutch. She has gone with her daughter, Mrs. Turner, and her

granddaughters to stay in Felixstowe this month (August), and I hope to have a good account of her health soon.

That ever-to-be-remembered clever singer, Clara Novello, I can never forget. As mentioned earlier in the "Recollections," I heard her sing at the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, on the Sunday before it was opened by her Majesty Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, in May 1851. I had heard Madame Clara Novello sing at Exeter Hall before then, and admired her lovely silver-clarion voice, never dreaming that in a few years I should sing with her at St. Martin's Hall. It was the year after I made my *début* there, Mr. Hullah giving Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* on October 24th, 1855, when Madame Clara Novello, myself, Mr. Lockey, Mr. Winn, and Mr. Buckland sang the fine music; and in December 1855, Madame Novello also sang in the *Messiah* at St. Martin's Hall, I singing the contralto parts. In the *Daily News* of December 20th, the notice is very pleasant. It says:—"We never heard Madame Novello exert herself with greater effect. The series of recitatives commencing 'There were shepherds abiding in the fields,' were beautifully delivered, and the air 'Rejoice greatly' was a performance of extraordinary power and brilliancy; nor did we ever hear Mr. Lockey sustain his part more admirably. Miss

Palmer is a young singer of much merit, who has been brought forward by Mr. Hullah, and has become a great favourite at these concerts. She has a fine contralto voice, with taste and feeling. She sang the pathetic air, 'He was despised and rejected of men,' with great beauty and expression."

In the September of that year I went on a short tour with Mr. Willy, the violinist, and made a great success. The concerts were given in the South of England—Weymouth, Dorchester, Yeovil, Westbury, Bath, Sherborne, etc. I sang "L'Addio," by Mozart; "A Swedish Winter Song," by Mendelssohn; "I wandered by the brook-side," by Edward Fitzwilliam; and "O let me sing to thee," by A. Randegger, all of which were popular in those days.

In January 1856 Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* was again given at St. Martin's Hall, but Madame Clara Novello was otherwise engaged, and Madame Weiss sang the soprano part. The *Morning Advertiser* gives a favourable report of my singing in the oratorio:—"Madame Weiss sang very sweetly, 'Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets.' The greatest sensation, however, was made by Miss Palmer, whose delicious and rich tones told effectively in the recitative preceding, and in the air 'But the Lord is mindful of His own,' and obtained so decided a call for an encore that she

could not refuse it. This young singer is rapidly advancing in her art, and her broad and expressive style is gaining much on the public." This year (February) I sang at the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts, and that touching ballad of Sir Henry Bishop's, "Are you angry, mother?" was warmly encored. In April 1856 Madame Clara Novello sang at one of Mr. Hullah's Saturday Concerts (orchestral, but always with some vocal artists). She sang the *scena* from *Der Freischütz*, "Softly sighs," the *scena* from Mercadante's opera *Il Giuramento*, "Ma negli estremi istanti;" and together she and I gave the fine duet, "Quis est homo," from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, which was tremendously encored. The *Morning Post* says:—"Madame Clara Novello's voice is as fresh, full, and surpassingly beautiful—her execution as graceful and artistic as ever. She was most enthusiastically received, and the duet in which she took part elicited a rapturous encore. Miss Palmer, who is rising rapidly in public favour, rendered Mr. Fitzwilliam's song, 'I wandered by the brook-side,' with excellent taste, and a warmth of expression of which, judging from previous performances, we should scarcely have believed her capable."

Madame Novello continued to sing until 1860, when she was able to return with her husband, Count Gigliucci, to Italy. Before she left England

she gave a farewell concert, and I was engaged by her to sing at it, in St. James's Hall. The *Stabat Mater* of Rossini was performed, and our duet, "Quis est homo," was rapturously encored. From that date I never had the pleasure of meeting Madame Novello until March 1900, when I went on to Rome, after staying some months in my favourite foreign place, Mentone. It was an immense pleasure to me to see the Countess Gigliucci and one of her charming daughters while staying in Rome. I went to see her, and received very kind letters, one of which I print:—

*March 1900.*

DEAR MISS PALMER,—I sincerely congratulate you on obtaining for Sims Reeves one of the pensions.

I enclose two photos you desire, only to comply with your wish; but none of the very many made of me ever resembled me or *each other* (my only compensation); no friends ever cared for them, nor did I. I trust your fashionable cold will soon be cured—alas, every one is becolled!—and what wonder? The weather office is decidedly much out of order, and makes others ditto.—Yours sincerely,

CLARA GIGLIUCCI.

The Countess also sent me a very nice photograph taken from a picture by Murillo at Berlin—Saint Antonio with the holy Baby Jesus in his

arms—now framed and hung in my drawing-room, a very pleasant reminiscence of my visit to the Countess, and Rome also. She is in wonderfully good health, and we twice spent a most delightful long talk together, to my great pleasure. In April 1902, I was very anxious to make sure of the date as to when the Countess gave her farewell concert before leaving England, and wrote to her, receiving a very kind answer, telling me she left the profession at the end of 1860, so her farewell concert must have been some time that year. I hope to have the great pleasure of seeing Countess Gigliucci next year, when I think of visiting Rome after staying some weeks at my favourite Mentone.



CLARA NOVELLO (COUNTESS  
GIGLIUCCI).

Photo by Cardilli.

Another reminiscence of two well-known actresses comes to my mind afresh. Quite clearly do I remember that in June 1851 my father one afternoon brought Mr. Bateman, with his two darling little daughters, Kate and Ellen Bateman, to our house in Chepstow Villas, where we went to live in 1849, and left in the autumn of 1851.



Both the dear sisters had been brought to London to appear at St. James's Theatre in scenes from some of Shakespeare's plays, and in a charming little piece called *The Young Couple*. The two pretty and clever children gave us a representation of part of the latter on the day they came to our house. Of course we were so charmed that when they performed at St. James's Theatre we all went to see them, and they were much liked and applauded. A few days after Mr. Bateman brought the children, he invited us to go one Sunday to dine with them in Park Village East, Regent's Park, where, oddly enough, nearly ten years later (1860), we went to live ourselves. We saw the children play in the fifth act of *Richard III.*, Ellen, aged six, playing King Richard III., and Kate, aged eight, Richmond. The piece they played afterwards, *The Young Couple*, was translated from Scribe's *Le Mariage Enfantin*. Ellen acted the lover, Charles de Blonville; and Kate the sweetheart, Henrietta de Vigny. Soon after seeing them at St. James's, we left Chepstow Villas and went to live on Brixton Hill, my father having an engagement in Brixton. In the September of that year I commenced my lessons in singing, piano, harmony, and Italian at the Royal Academy of Music. It was a very long distance for me to go there four days



each week; so that I lost all chance of going again to the St. James's Theatre, nor did I see Ellen Bateman afterwards, as they left England upon playing for the last time there on October 18th. Many years after, Kate returned to London, playing Leah; but Ellen had left the stage and was married, so I only saw Kate then. She made a great effect in the Leah and several other parts. Later still, after her marriage, she played here again; and as I write she is engaged in teaching elocution at the Royal Academy of Music, and to private pupils. I had the great pleasure of seeing her (now Mrs. Crowe) lately, and of hearing a little granddaughter of hers reciting the Hubert and Prince Arthur scene in *King John* most wonderfully well, with so much expression, though the child had taught herself the whole scene. She is nearly twelve years old, and named Miss Leah Bateman Hunter. That she has a great natural talent for acting is very certain, or she could not have recited such parts so well, and I look forward with great interest to her coming years, trusting that she will become a well-known actress, as was her grandmother, Mrs. Crowe—or rather, Kate Bateman, that long-remembered name being still a household word in the theatrical world.

## CHAPTER VIII.

YEARS before I started singing in English operas I thought very seriously of the necessity there must be of knowing how to act and move on the stage, and talking about it to people interested in stage matters, I was induced to take a part in a performance to be given for the benefit of the Women's Club. Pauline in *Delicate Ground* was chosen for me, the affair taking place on February 8th, 1869, at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley Street. The *Era* gave a good notice of my performance of Pauline, a delightful part to play, which I thoroughly enjoyed, and I venture to give the kind criticism. I had, when very young, played some curious parts at the boarding-school, Maize Hill, when about ten years of age appearing as old Mr. Pickle; and when sixteen I played Mandane in *Artaxerxes*, and two years later, Miss Biffin in *Popping the Question*, both at our friends' house in Kennington, in March 1849, which place we left for Chepstow Villas, Bayswater, in the June of that year. But Pauline in *Delicate Ground* was

infinitely more to my taste than the earlier ones I ventured on when so young. The *Era* said :—  
“An amateur performance was given at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley Street, on Monday night last. The entertainment was in special behalf of the funds of the Women’s Club and Institute, Newman Street, Oxford Street. Those who took part in the proceedings of Monday night cannot be charged with any lack of zeal, and that the institution to be benefited commands a great amount of sympathy was proved by the attendance. Every seat in the room was taken, and many persons were compelled to content themselves with standing room in the corridor. The Beethoven Rooms are not, we believe, often used for performances of the dramatic order, but the arrangements were most efficient, and made in excellent taste. The scenery was quite fresh and all that could be desired, and a pianoforte was substituted for the usual orchestra. The performers were two young ladies whose assistance was valuable indeed. *Delicate Ground*, the first piece of the evening, gave Miss Palmer an opportunity of showing a very decided aptitude for acting. We believe we are right in stating this lady made her first appearance on Monday night. From her graceful self-possession and easy, unembarrassed manner the audience might not unreasonably have credited

her with considerable stage experience. There was, indeed, very little of the novice apparent in Miss Palmer's efforts, and she is to be congratulated more emphatically than usual upon having so far conquered all feeling of nervousness as to be able to devote herself solely to the proper rendering of the charming character of Pauline. The pretty petulance of the 'female citizen' was very delicately expressed by Miss Palmer. She was even more successful in describing the dawn and progress of Pauline's true and steadfast love for her husband. In every phase of the character (by no means an easy one to perform) Miss Palmer was careful not to overstep the line of nature and feminine refinement, and this discrimination on her part was duly acknowledged by the audience, who applauded her heartily."

This success certainly gave me more courage to think of singing in operas, at Madame Parepa Rosa's request, at Drury Lane Theatre, in 1871. In the August of the year 1870 I started on the opera tour of Stanley Betjemann's project. The first night, *Rose of Castille*, by Balfe, was produced, and I must confess that, having to appear the very first time in an opera as a boy, I was extremely nervous, and glad when the second act commenced, as then I was in female dress. Afterwards I did not feel so nervous, and the part of Lazarillo in

*Maritana* was so interesting to me, that I really liked playing it and singing the charming song "Alas, those chimes." Before starting in Banbury, I explained to Mr. Betjemann that I had promised to spend a few

days at Gloucester with Mrs. Ellicott and the Bishop of Gloucester, so that after playing in *Rose of Castille* on the Monday, I went off next morning to Gloucester. I remained there till Friday afternoon, and returned about five o'clock, having

arranged with Mr. Betjemann that I should not sing that evening, as there would be no time to rehearse the stage business. I had a very pleasant time with Mrs. Ellicott, one evening being reserved for a musical party, at which the *Stabat*



BESSIE PALMER.

Photo by Watkins.

*Mater* of Rossini was given. Mrs. Ellicott had real love for music, and her daughter Rosalind had great talent, both in piano-playing and in composing music, vocal and orchestral.

Returning to Banbury on Friday, to my surprise I found Stanley Betjemann at the station awaiting my arrival, when to my horror he told me he had been forced to produce *Trovatore* that evening, and of course I must play Azucena! Announced as it was, I could not refuse to sing the part, but I confess that I was terribly nervous, having had no rehearsal of the stage business, and knowing nothing of the arrangements of entering, etc. Fortunately, I became very interested in the part as I went on, and simply acted as my impression of Azucena's feelings and motives urged me. To my great delight everything went well, and when the curtain descended, after Azucena's death, every one of the company and Mr. de Solla rushed on to the stage declaring I had played Azucena splendidly. Fortunately, my memory was always safe, so I forgot none of the delightful music of Verdi's interesting opera, and after that second performance I soon lost all nervousness. In January 1871 Mr. Betjemann's tour ceased, and on the 30th Mr. Isidore de Solla recommenced the tour at Banbury again, going on to many towns each week. I had great success in all my parts.



I remember we went to Leamington in March, and I had great pleasure in becoming friendly with Signor Aspa and his wife; she was studying at the Academy of Music the same time as myself, so recognised my name in the operatic list. Aynsley Cook's brother, Furneaux Cook, was the baritone in De Solla's company, and sang very well and acted capitally. I much preferred his singing to that of his brother Aynsley, who to me always seemed exaggerated in style. When I afterwards joined Charles Durand's Touring Company, I was glad to find Furneaux Cook was also engaged. Many years after I remember singing with him at a concert at the Brighton Aquarium. Now



*Yours sincerely  
Furneaux Cook.*

Photo by W. B. Barker.

I regret to see that he is dead (Jan. 19, 1903). Some months previously he had lost his sight, which was very sad; but I had not been able to see him before his death, as I had been seriously ill from an attack of influenza, and recovered only very slowly from it.

After Leamington we went on to Stratford-on-Avon. While there I was asked by the Rev. Mr. Bell to sing "O rest in the Lord" in his church, where our great dramatic poet Shakespeare lies. Mr. Bell was so pleased with my singing that he begged me to accept a very pretty pair of jet earrings (I was in mourning for the loss of my mother, who died in September 1870), with very clever little enamel portraits of the great poet in them. Unfortunately, some months after I lost one, but still have the other, keeping it carefully as a charming remembrance of my first visit to the interesting Stratford-on-Avon. On April 29th we went on to Portsmouth, and I made a great success there in all the operas. On May 11th we concluded, and the next morning a letter was sent to me from the theatre, of which I give a correct copy:—

PORTSMOUTH, 12th May 1871.

DEAR MADAM,—At the conclusion of your performances in Portsmouth I take the liberty of writing to thank you for the very great pleasure they have afforded me. I have been here by accident for a fortnight, a stranger to the town, and without a single acquaintance—and it has been quite refreshing to me to attend Mr. de Solla's operas in the evening. But I address myself to *you* in particular, because it has been principally to you that



I have owed my gratification. I claim to be an educated person, and am always excessively offended by any manifestations of stage clap-trap, and flashiness, and vulgar efforts to draw down the applause of boobies. But in you I am happy to recognise judgment, good taste, and real feeling—and *these* double the charm of a very agreeable and well-managed voice. Permit me to add, without any impertinent meaning, that in addition to the above advantages you have a manner of action and an expression of feature which create a personal liking towards the singer—and this must always add greatly to an auditor's pleasure.

I think there is—but I am not intending to flatter, but rather hoping to please you by sincere testimony—so I will go no further.

To such a letter one does not sign one's name, unless when there is some ulterior object—and I have none. Allow me, therefore, dear madam, to subscribe myself,

Your obliged and respectful servant,

T.

In April the company was at Canterbury, and one morning the following comic and amusing letter came to me where I was lodging for the week. We were starting that morning for Portsmouth, and directly I met Charles Durand at the Station I exclaimed, "Ah! the letter is from you, I'm sure. I laughed so tremendously in reading it

in my bedroom, my landlady having brought it up directly the post arrived, that she rushed up and asked if I was ill. Possibly she thought me hysterical, but I simply roared with laughter at your comically-invented story." Charles Durand has always a very clever way of looking serious when full of fun, so he looked most surprised and serious, only there was a gleam of fun in his eyes as I read the letter to those of the company with whom I was friendly. He knew I had been for months a singer in the Roman Catholic Chapel, St. Aloysius, so invented this peculiar and droll letter, thinking I should not recognise the handwriting, but I did at once:—

*Sunday, April 23rd.*

MY DEAR LADY,—Facing the altar on the right-hand side in the gallery, on a front seat, you may have seen me. On my right sits a lady with a severe face and a bonnet trimmed with green; she is very stout, and breathes snortingly. On my left, a middle-aged, pimply gentleman, with a nose that evidently intends some day reaching his ears; him you must have seen, and, as I have hinted, you may have seen me. I wear a blue neck-tie—I always wear blue neck-ties—and I have a Roman profile. I mention my profile because, standing as you do, you would necessarily see my profile; it is considered striking, and, as I have before said, is Roman—I have always

had a Roman profile. The first time I heard you, now six months ago, your voice sank into my heart—the music had a significance till then unknown. I went home and sat down to my dinner—I always sit down to my dinner—but I found I could not eat. I longed to hear you again. Sunday at length came, but it did not bring you. I waited till the service was over—I always do. I introduced myself to the gentleman who waves the stick; he told me your name, and said you sometimes sent a substitute. Since then I have never missed a Sunday, and the effect of your voice and singing has destroyed my repose. I feel I must know you; my name is—but you will see my name at the end of my note. I want an introduction; shall I ask the gentleman with the stick? He seems amiable, though dyed. If you do not approve of this means, will you suggest some other? I shall, of course, be only too happy to act on your suggestion. I hope to hear from you—I always do. I cannot wait after next Sunday; so if you do not write to me I must carry out my own idea. I am well off—I always have been—and my parents, who are still alive, will leave me property. I am six-and-thirty, and have been for two months.—I am your—and always shall be—sincere admirer,

JULIUS HEATHTON.

Charles Durand still declared that he had not written this amusing note. The next month (May) we sang in operas at Worthing, and one day

appeared in the *Sussex Coast Mercury* the following flattering poem by Julius Heathton:—

TO MISS PALMER, THE CHARMING  
CONTRALTO.

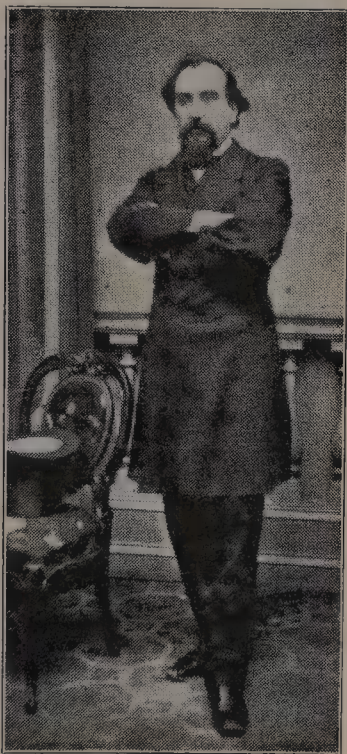
Hail to the lady whose potential voice  
Makes your nerves tremble or your heart rejoice;  
Whose thrilling accents are an evening's joy,  
Be she a gipsy or a faithful boy.  
The human voice, when good, acts like a spell,  
But Palmer's more—contains a joy as well;  
One feels the charm, one's very soul expands;  
A soft desire our longing sense commands;  
A dread comes o'er us that it may not last—  
Must be remembered, reckoned of the past.  
Welcome the time that brings her back once more  
To Worthing's then thrice happy, joyous shore!  
Welcome that time for me, for until then  
Silent shall be my miserable pen.

JULIUS HEATHTON.

*West Worthing, May 22nd, 1871.*

Of course I knew well that this clever little poem was written by Mr. Durand, and have carefully preserved it ever since. When Mr. Durand joined Isidore de Solla's Opera Company, I must say it greatly added to its good effects, for he always played his parts so well; sang them well too, and when playing Lord Allcash in *Fra Diavolo* his comicality was most amusing. Many stories were told to me about Charles Durand—which made me

thoroughly enjoy the natural fun and odd actions he used to go through—years before I had the pleasure of meeting him in Isidore de Solla's Company. Years back he had been singing in operas, and Augustus Braham (the son of the late celebrated singer John Braham) sang the tenor parts. He was very bald, though not at all old, and once when he was singing in operas at Bath, one morning a most excited crowd appeared at the same hour at his hotel. They were all hairdressers, and had received notes requesting them to call (each one) at his hotel with some good wigs! I heard that this was arranged by Charles Durand, out of fun. Once, too, in a country town (I forget the name) there were two inns, one the "Red Lion" and the other the "Black Lion" Inn. Imagine the amazement of the two landlords and the folks living in the streets when one morning the



CHARLES DURAND.

Photo by Cook.

“Red Lion” had changed into a “Black Lion,” and the “Black Lion” into a “Red” one! Now, the English Opera Company was singing there, and somehow vague whispers came out suggesting that some one had cleverly re-painted the two little lions at daybreak, and—it—was Charles Durand! Of course, this happened many years before I had joined Mr. Durand’s company, when he was young and full of fun. With pleasure I give the portrait of this amiable artist.

On June 6th, 1871, I appeared for the first time in opera (Martha) at the Crystal Palace, but returned to Bath the next day, where I sang till the 10th.

On June 12th I sang in Bristol, and the next day the following appeared in the *Bristol Daily News*:—

“If the company is favoured in its *prima donna* (Miss Arabella Smythe), it is even more so in its *contralto*. Miss Palmer has long had a name as a concert singer of rare musical attainments in the best circles in London; but we doubt if those who have heard her only in that capacity and at the musical Festivals could at all conceive how fine she is as an exponent of lyric tragedy. We have rarely witnessed a more powerful Azucena. Her description of the death of the Zingara, ‘Fierce flames were raging,’ was given with such impres-

siveness and thrilling effect that her auditors were at once prepared for a fine performance of the ill-fated Gipsy, and they were not disappointed. She was equally successful in the simulation of intense grief and of earnest passion; and her singing, always impressive, was marked alternately by great tenderness and impulsive vigour. Few things could be more truly tragic and affecting than her rendering, 'Poor my home was, yet most happy;' and her share in the everywhere-known *duo*, 'Yes, I am weary,' was quite as admirable. Miss Palmer was warmly received throughout the opera, and we do not hesitate to say that she established herself a favourite."

On June 22nd I sang in the *Messiah* at the Albert Hall. Mr. George Perren, who rendered the tenor parts, went up to the topmost gallery to hear me sing "He was despised," and when he returned told me that even as I sang part of the serious song *pianissimo* he heard every note and every word most clearly and effectively. On July 6th he engaged me to sing in *Il Trovatore* at the Crystal Palace, in which I made a great success.

On September 30th I appeared at St. James's Theatre, in Rose Hersee's company. We commenced with the *Rose of Castille*, and continued there until October 21st. Then the company went to the Standard Theatre, Shoreditch, and we sang



there until November 25th, I going off to Manchester on November 16th to sing at Charles Hallé's Concert, in Beethoven's Mass in C and Mendelssohn's *Walpurgis Night*, returning next morning home, and singing in the evening again at the Standard in *Marta*, and in the *Bohemian Girl* next night, etc., until November 25th. On December 30th I journeyed to Cork to join Rose Hersee's company. We were there for a fortnight, when I returned home after a very happy engagement.

Some long time before I started singing on the stage I was engaged to sing in St. Aloysius's Chapel in Somers Town, where the clever composer of the cantata *Ancient Mariner*, Francis Barnett, was the organist; his father, Mr. Joseph Alfred Barnett, brother of the well-known composer John Barnett, sang tenor and was conductor; Mr. G. Renwick, bass; and Miss Josephine Barnett (Mrs. Currie) was the soprano all the time I was there. Mrs. J. A. Barnett, mother of the well-known and admired composer John Francis Barnett, helped to sing in the choir. I had the great pleasure, while singing at St. Aloysius's, to be invited one evening to Mr. and Mrs. Barnett's house, to go through their clever son's *Ancient Mariner*, which he had recently written, and in which I sang on December 21st, 1880, at Dr. Rea's Concert in Newcastle-on-Tyne, having the



charming song, "O sleep, it is a gentle thing," transposed lower. It was most successful and encored tremendously. At the same concert I sang, in the second part of the programme, Gounod's song, "The Worker," which was also encored, and I then gave "Quando a te" from Gounod's *Faust*.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE first Festival I sang at was the Worcester Festival in 1857, and the Rev. R. Sergeant engaged me for it.

On the 7th of September, 1858, I had the pleasure of singing at the opening of the new Town Hall, Leeds, by our dear Queen Victoria and her estimable consort, Prince Albert. After I was engaged I received a most kind letter from Mr. Atkinson, a well-known solicitor in Leeds, requesting me to go and stay the week at his home in Woodhouse Square, Leeds, and he and Mrs. Atkinson were most kind to me. Miss Dolby was to sing the principal contralto parts in *Elijah*, but, unfortunately for her, she had a bad cold, and I was requested to sing all the contralto parts throughout the oratorio, and was warmly applauded. I sang a duet with Charles Santley at one of the evening concerts, which was very effective.

Curiously, in after-years I became well acquainted with a niece of Mr. Atkinson's—Miss Winifred Heaton, who married a young friend of mine, Sydney T. Pawling. His elder brother, Kingsford

Pawling, the head of the Mudie Select Library, and his dear sister, Katherine Pawling, were all most kind to me, for at that time I was quite alone in Park Village East, my father having died in January 1878, some years before we became so friendly.

On February 10th, 1859, I was in Bath, to sing at the morning and evening concerts given by the Glee and Madrigal Society, Madame Rudersdorff, Wilbye Cooper, Montem Smith, the counter-tenor Mr. Young, and Lewis Thomas being the other vocalists. In the paper the notices of my singing were very good, as follows:—"Miss Palmer is making way rapidly in public estimation. The fine tone (contralto) of her voice is similar to Miss Dolby's, and her intonation and enunciation evince careful study. The unequivocal approbation she elicited, and the many encores she was complimented with, were highly gratifying to her professional exertions. The duet with Mr. Montem Smith, 'Si, la stanchezza,' was admirably sung by both—we never heard it better. In the evening Miss Palmer sang a very pretty ballad, by Chorley, 'Here, on the threshold stone,' and being encored, gave 'Terence's Farewell' with equal success."

On February 14th, 1859, the Monday Popular Concerts at St. James's Hall commenced, though some preparatory concerts had been given the

year before, at which Madame Elvira Behrens had sung occasionally. She had first appeared at St. Martin's Hall in 1858, and sang several times at Mr. Hullah's secular concerts, until she married, when her career very soon ceased, owing to the ill-health she had. The first Monday Popular Concert was wholly devoted to Mendelssohn's music, and the vocal artists were Miss Stabbach, myself, Wilbye Cooper, and Charles Santley. We all sang several times together there. The next concert, February 21st, we gave a selection from Mozart's music, when I sang that lovely song, "L'Addio," which was tremendously encored, indeed, it has nearly always met with the same reception. It was so admired that I was constantly asked to sing it at the Monday Popular Concerts. In the *Times* of February 22nd, 1859, a long notice was given of the concert the night before, speaking most highly of everything, and the following is the notice of my singing of "L'Addio":—"The greatest 'hit' of the evening, however, was achieved by Miss Palmer, who gave the well-known contralto air, 'L'Addio,' with such fervid and eloquent expression as to call down one of the most spontaneous encores ever elicited by a vocal performance."

In April of the same year the *Leader* had the following notice:—"The selection that evening was entirely from the works of English composers, and

was a delightful one. The first instrumental piece of the evening was a noble quintett by the gifted and prolific author of the beautiful English opera, *Charles II.* (G. A. Macfarren). It was charmingly played by Messrs. Wieniawski, Schreurs, Piatti, Howell, and Charles Hallé. The vocal stars of the evening were Miss Palmer and Mr. Sims Reeves. The former was in delightful voice, and sang so beautifully in Mr. J. W. Davison's 'Swifter far than summer's flight,' as to be very warmly encored. Mr. Reeves is, we are happy to say, himself again. In the first part he sang the 'Ah! non lasciarmi, no!' by Macfarren. Of this song, the amusing handbook to the popular concerts (which, by the way, is the very *crème de la crème* of programmes) tells the following little story:—It was first published in the *British Vocal Album* in 1843. Mario, who happened to hear it soon after, remarked that 'it must either have been composed by a German who had passed half his life in Italy, or by an Italian who had passed half his life in Germany,' intending the compliment that it united German harmony with Italian melody. In the second part Mr. Reeves sang, with the greatest effect, 'It was a young knight troubadour,' by John Barnett, of *Mountain Sylph* renown. It was, of course, encored; but Mr. Reeves, who, contrary to a stupid common practice, chose in this instance to assume

that an encore meant an encore, and not 'Pretty Jane,' proceeded to repeat the Troubadour song and its beautiful burden 'Alla Colomba,' when a party of decently-clad roughs caused a riot by calling for the tune of their predilection. The singer demurred, and, being supported by all the gentlefolks present, withdrew. Messrs. Hallé and Wieniawski mounted the orchestra to play a trio of Sterndale Bennett's, but the agitation still continued, and bid fair, save for the intervention of the adjacent policeman, to have attained important dimensions. It is, however, satisfactory to report that the vagabonds who so indecently claimed to hear four songs when they paid for two, were forced to retire, with the loss of part of the good things that had been so liberally provided for them."

In the *Leader* of May 7th, the same year, there was a notice of another "Mozart" night at the Monday Popular Concerts, the vocalists being Miss Theresa Jefferys, myself, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Santley. Of me the paper said—"Miss Palmer sang the lovely 'Addio' with intense passion, and a degree of feeling which she hardly seemed to have under control. She gave the refrain, 'Vivi piu felice,' etc., with exquisite and soul-stirring sentiment. In the harmonious burden of the quartette from the *finale* to *Il Seraglio*

(called in the bill 'Each budding flower its leaf discloses') her beautiful voice told with fine effect."

Later on, the date of which I forgot to write on a notice from the paper, the programme was selected from Haydn and Weber. The criticism is interesting in the names of the instrumentalists, and commences thus :—" On Monday night St. James's Hall was again densely crowded by an audience who had come for the express purpose of listening to music of a refined and elevated character, and whose expectations were realised in every respect. The programme was made out entirely from the compositions, vocal and instrumental, of Haydn and Weber, the first part being assigned to the former, the second to the latter. Among the instrumental pieces were the quartet containing the famous variations on 'God save the Emperor,' and the pianoforte trio in G (Haydn); the trio in G minor, for pianoforte, flute, and violoncello; and a selection from the pianoforte duets (Weber). The executants were Messrs. Blagrove and Ries (violins), Mr. Schreurs (viola), Signor Piatti (violoncello), Mr. Pratten (flute), and Messrs. Lindsay Sloper and Benedict (pianoforte)—all artists of first-rate eminence. The singers were Madame Enderssohn, who obtained an encore in 'She never told her love,' one of the most beautiful of Haydn's canzonets; Miss Palmer, who won new laurels in

the grand dramatic scene, 'Ariana a Naxos'; Miss Stabbach, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and Mr. Santley, who was encored in the air, 'For as the waters,' from the cantata called *Natur und Liebe*, one of the least known, but by no means least admirable, of Weber's vocal compositions. The audience were charmed with the performance from end to end, and specially delighted with the quartet and trios. The next concert, for which M. Wieniawski and M. Hallé are announced, will be devoted to Beethoven."

The Monday Popular Concerts continued for years, and even now (1902) the "Saturday Pops." continue, though this year they are on alternate Saturdays only, the intervening event being imitations of the London Ballad Concerts. The great pianists who played constantly at the "Monday Pops." were, first of all, that charming, clever young girl, Miss Arabella Goddard, who also played at all the Festivals when I was singing there. Later on Charles Hallé made his appearance at St. James's Hall in the "Monday Pops," and later still commenced giving concerts of his own in Manchester, where he lived. There I constantly sang, and often he engaged me year after year to sing at Bradford, Leeds, etc., generally the night after I sang at his concert in Manchester. Of course, when I had gone in for English Opera tours I



found it very difficult to take any concert engagement, as sometimes I was a great distance from many of the special towns in England. I sang in operas in Scotland and Ireland often—Dublin and Cork and Limerick I visited with Charles Durand's Opera Company often, and also with Mr. H. Walsham's touring opera-party. In Edinburgh and Glasgow, too, I often sang the operas in Mr. Durand's tours, and was very successful both in Ireland and Scotland.

In August 1873, Charles Durand's Opera Company appeared at the Spa Saloon, Scarborough, and I was very successful there, my songs being always encored. In the paper there was a notice of *Lucrezia Borgia*, saying of me as follows:—"Miss Palmer's playing as Maffeo Orsini was most bright and graceful, and her rendering of 'Come, let us be happy together' was the signal for one of the most persistent encores of the evening." Charles Durand was much applauded there also. I remember seeing him in operas brought out by Wm. Harrison the tenor, at Covent Garden, and director of the operas also; it was in 1859, and I think he remained with Harrison some time. Of course then I had no idea of singing in operas, and never thought I should be engaged in 1872 by him for many tours, year after year. In 1871 he was engaged as well

as myself by Mr. Isidore de Solla, who liked my singing and acting sufficiently to engage me the next year; and afterwards I received engagements from George Perren at the Crystal Palace, and also from Henry Walsham, with whom I went to Ireland, as well as to many towns in England.

On November 21st, 1883, I had the pleasure of singing in *St. Paul* (Mendelssohn's fine oratorio) at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Mr. Joseph Maas was the tenor. He sang very nicely. I used to sing very often at concerts at the Town Hall there; in fact, I have already written of several successes I made, for I really was a great favourite in Newcastle, having gone there often in the autumn, year after year, to give lessons to very many pupils. In 1887 Mr. Rea had become Dr. Rea. I sang also that November, on the 5th, "The Worker," by Gounod, being tremendously encored, and also "Good-bye," by Tosti. But I then gave up singing, and teaching singing also, as I felt I ought to lead a quiet life since my poor dear friend, Mrs. Williams, had left me after her death in September 1886 sufficient money to live on comfortably. Unfortunately I had bad health while remaining in Park Village East, Regent's Park, and I certainly improved in health when I went in June 1893 to Cheyne Court, Chelsea, near to the pleasant Embankment. Now,

after a fair trial, I decidedly prefer Chelsea to Regent's Park.

At the commencement of this chapter I stated that I appeared at the Worcester Festival in 1857, in *Elijah*, the first concert; also at the two next evenings' concerts, and *Messiah* on the last day



BIRMINGHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL ARTISTES IN 1861.

Photo by Burton & Co.

of the week—all contralto parts were sung by me; and in 1863 I sang again during that year's Festival. Birmingham Festival in 1861 had the following great artistes:—Mdlle. Tietjens, Madame Rudersdorff, Mdlle. Adelina Patti, Madame Sainton-Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, Montem Smith, Signor Giuglini, Mr. Santley, Signor Belletti; and

I sang also, and Miss Arabella Goddard played piano solos; while Michael Costa was the conductor. I also sang at the Birmingham Festival of 1864, when most of the great artistes named in the 1861 Festival again sang and played, with Madame Lemmens Sherrington added to the vocalist ladies; Mr. W. H. Cummings, Mr. Weiss, and Mario also sang, in place of Montem Smith, Signor Giuglini, and Signor Belletti. Mons. Sainton played the violin that year, and Mr. Costa was still the conductor. His oratorio, *Naaman*, was produced there, and Lord Leigh, who was president, encored many things in it; but when the fine quartet, "Honour and Glory, Almighty, be thine" ended, there was a most rapturous encore raised instantly by the audience. Mr. Sims Reeves commenced it, then I sang in duet with him, and in the next bars Adelina Patti and Charles Santley joined in. It was very well written, and the lovely voice of our greatest tenor, Sims Reeves, made a splendid effect in the opening solo of the quartet. I sang at many concerts in Birmingham as well as at the two Festivals, and in after-years I had great success there in English operas given by Charles Durand and Henry Walsham.

On September 17th, 1860, I sang at the Norwich Festivals, Clara Novello, Madame Weiss, Sims

Reeves, Wilbye Cooper, Santley, and Mr. Weiss all singing during the week. On the 19th September Molique's oratorio, *Abraham*, was given in the morning, and Benedict's *Undine* in the evening, Clara Novello, myself, Sims Reeves, and Weiss singing all the parts with great success. *Undine* was a most interesting cantata, and I often sang "The Baron's Old Castle" (my song) at concerts afterwards. In 1863 the Festival took place in September, after the Worcester Festival, but unfortunately I had taken a cold, and was obliged to engage Miss Lascelles to take my place in the *Messiah*, as my voice was husky and poor. However, I was able to sing at the evening concert, when Benedict's *Richard Cœur de Lion* was given. Tietjens, Lemmens Sherrington, Sims Reeves, Montem Smith, Weiss, and Santley all sang at that Festival. Years after, I was singing in English operas in Norwich. On September 8th, 1873, Charles Durand started a month's engagement, opening with *Il Trovatore*. In the *Norwich Argus* of September 13th, the following notice is very amusing, as well as very flattering to my singing and acting:—

"The Norwich Theatre has been well attended since the opening on Monday last; indeed, we do not remember when opera management in Norwich has been so fortunate in the pecuniary part, and

so popular from a lyrical point of view. Something has gone wrong with most managements, but this appears all *couleur de rose*, and all we can do is to congratulate Mr. Durand on his success. Monday being the first night, no sooner were the doors open than the pit may be said to have filled, and long before the first few bars were given by the orchestra for the commencement of *Il Trovatore* there was not standing room. The large upper circle nearly followed the same course of repletion as the pit, nor could the 'boys' of the sixpenny region be held back. All that was wanting to complete the scene were good dress-boxes, but these are by no means visible on the opening of an opera season in Norwich. However, the more thanks to those who were present in that distinguished tier—especially if they paid. In the dress-circle were young gentlemen with books to see whether, we presume, the actors were perfect in their parts, and where we sat a huge score of the opera was laid out like a corpse on the edge of the box, guarded and watched by three sylphides and a distinguished young gentleman critic barnacled, umbrella'd, and bearded, from a local penny paper, and we trembled as we gazed at the ponderous volume before his party. It is too late in the day, we imagine, to say anything of Verdi's tragic *chef-d'œuvre*. There is the opera, and there it will



always be, in the place it now holds, while crotchets and quavers are what they are, and tune and melody are unforgotten. The receptions were enthusiastic. Mdlle. Mariani, who came to Norwich a few seasons back as *prima donna* and got somewhat benighted through the management of that day engaging a then great favourite (Madame Haigh Dyer), came in for her share of a hearty recognition, and after throwing off her little nervousness, piped as sweetly as ever. Count di Luna (Mr. C. Durand) was the next appearance, and again the storm was evoked. Mr. W. Parkinson warbled his serenade outside and threw the audience into convulsions of delight, which were repeated on his appearance hatted and cloaked as the mysterious Troubadour. One lady, however, received none of these ovations. When the curtain rose on the second act and discovered Azucena there was dead silence, and the chorus started off as usual. This by no means, however, repressed her efforts, since when her time arrived she fairly electrified the audience by her fine voice and lyrical accomplishments. More, Miss Palmer proved herself an actress of high pretensions, and never were the old gipsy's characteristics so well given in Norwich as by her. She was always in scene, and her flashing eyes and lips that seemed to shrink and disclose the deadly fangs of the old woman,

while her bosom 'swelled with its fraught, for 'tis of aspic's tongue,' will not be easily forgotten by the spectators. Nay, by the time she had finished her first scene she had stamped herself as a cantatrice of the highest order, while her byplay was of the happiest and most characteristic kind. It was whispered that the *débutante* had made her mark in the concert-room and at Festivals. We, however, regarded her as a fine stager, who had been visited by some benign fairy and the little fellow had taught her her business while her *confrères* were asleep. Such a voice, too—a pure contralto, clear, powerful, and of great compass, capable of descending to zero, if she please, and what gained Miss Palmer the greatest applause was the ease with which she slid from the notes of her text powerfully intonated to other adventitious flights. . . . Tuesday, Wallace's evergreen *Maritana*. There was a second fine house, pit and upper circle filled, and a good gallery. The overture was well played by the band. Our young gentleman critic, the possessor of the previous night's score, this evening sat apart from us, and, pulling his beard, looked very severe indeed. Well, Mdlle. Mariani was La Gitana; Lazarillo, Miss Palmer; Don Cæsar, Mr. Parkinson; and Don José, Mr. Charles Durand. The way the opera rolled along was a delight. For years we have



heard Mr. Parkinson sing, and though always pleasing, he seems now to have so completely mastered and improved his voice as to be as near a *great* singer as it is possible to be; while Mariani warbled excellently as Maritana, and Lazarillo certainly is the very best as interpreted by Miss Palmer ever seen in Norwich, and whether we consider the excellence of her voice in 'Alas, those chimes,' in the trio, 'Turn on, old Time,' in the duet of 'Sacred Lady,' of her action in removing the bullets from the guns to save Don Cæsar, in all she was simply perfect, never forgetting the business of the scene for a moment, and standing as still as a sentinel presenting arms when required. Mr. Charles Durand was all that could be desired in Don José; his songs, 'In happy moments' and 'So my courage,' being much applauded, while Mr. Parkinson fairly stormed the house in 'Let me like a soldier fall,' 'There is a flower that bloometh,' and the reconciliation duet with Maritana in the last act, while 'Scenes that are brightest' and a valse of Arditì's sung as a *finale* were beautifully sung by Mdlle. Mariani.

"The young gentleman critic, however, we have perhaps too often referred to, made a sad mistake in his notice on Wednesday, since he wrote in the *Press* that though Miss Palmer was announced

for Lazarillo she failed to appear, and that Madame Fice performed the part as her substitute, and thus taken at a nonplus, Madame resolved to stand on her own merits, and not appear in any way a makeshift, consequently her rendering of 'Alas! those chimes' was very painstaking, and was deservedly encored. Now, see how well acquainted the young gentleman critic is with ladies who only appeared on the previous night. Another voice like the Palmer's, another action like the Palmer's—would not the manager like to catch one? But no, there stood the celebrated cantatrice in the flesh—and not too much of it either—and acted and sang as few contraltos have acted and sung on the city stage, while the young gentleman, without his score on this occasion, conjured the lady into Madame Fice. Well, the public laughed, the singers laughed, Miss Palmer laughed, and the band laughed, and if that is not enough for the musical young gentleman of the *Daily Press*, we hardly know what is. *Maritana* went tremendously, the performers being summoned several times before the curtain. Mr. T. Melling is a capital conductor.

"The young gentleman critic thus notices the *contretemps* he made respecting Miss Palmer on Tuesday evening:—'In our notice yesterday (Tuesday) we unconsciously paid Miss Palmer

a high compliment for her impersonation of Lazarillo in *Maritana*.' No doubt in mistaking her for Madame Fice the young gentleman critic did pay her an Irish compliment. 'It was so individualised and so distinct, both in make-up and bearing, from that of Azucena on the opening night, that we judged the performance to be that of the other contralto in the company.'

"The excellent young gentleman critic of the *Daily Press*, sucking the handle of his umbrella in the boxes, deemed, then, that Miss Palmer, who made her appearance in the old gipsy, was always to be an old woman, and did not know that Lazarillo, as a boy to the water-carrier, could be performed by her. Did he expect Lazarillo to be made up like Azucena, to be convinced it was Miss Palmer? Why, it is the story of the Greek and the pig all over again. Was the figure no guide, the *voice* no guide, the acting no guide, as to who it was? Lazarillo (the boy) was simply not attired as Azucena (the old woman), consequently the impersonator could not be Miss Palmer, but must have consequently been Madame Fice, who—— But why offend that lady in order to put the young gentleman critic right? The apology to our minds is worse than the original match."

I must acknowledge that we all laughed very

much when we read this amusingly written article, at the end of the first week of Durand's Opera Company, and fortunately I kept the long criticism, with the printed title and date of the newspaper at the top of the page. I sang very often in Norwich with Charles Durand's company after this, and in 1878 I sang in Mr. Henry Walsham's company, Madame Rose Hersee, Henry Walsham, tenor, and Mr. Ludwig, with a very fine bass voice, being the other principals. Several other times I was engaged by Mr. Henry Walsham for weeks, and his wife, Madame Telma, as she was named, sang often the principal soprano parts. In looking through some of my old diaries, I find that I sang in operas at Huddersfield in December 1881 with Mr. Charles Durand and his company. Madame Blanche Cole, Mr. Dudley Thomas, Mr. Walter Bolton, and Mr. Gilbert King played and sang the first night in *Maritana*, and I was Lazarillo. The *Huddersfield Examiner* of January 1st, 1881, gave a better account of me than of all the others. It said:—

“The best singing and acting was by Miss Palmer, as the boy Lazarillo. She finished every detail of her part with completeness, and acted throughout with proper spirit, grace, and pathos. Her singing of ‘Alas! those chimes’ was remarkably artistic in all respects, and she did her part

equally well in the beautiful duet 'Sainted mother' with Madame Blanche Cole."

The *Examiner* also gives a nice notice of my singing in *Il Trovatore* the next night:—"A very fine performance of the part of Azucena was given by Miss Palmer, who both sang and acted with great dramatic ability and finish."

Looking through many cuttings from musical papers, I find some charming notices of songs written by me. The first, published by Hutchings & Romer, had a bright notice in *The Queen* newspaper, and I give the whole of it:—

"VOCAL MUSIC.—'Gathering Heartsease.' By Bessie Palmer. Bravo, Miss Palmer! bravissimo, indeed! It is the first time we have met with the name of Miss Palmer, so well known and admired in the concert-room as one of our ablest contraltos, in the character of composer; and we can truly say that if this is really her first appearance in that capacity, it is one of the very best first appearances on record. 'Gathering Heartsease' is set to a most winning and appropriate melody, ranging neither high nor low, and this pretty, characteristic air is accompanied as only a thorough musician knows how to accompany the voice, each verse (of which there are three) being likewise varied so ingeniously as to avoid anything approaching to monotony. We strongly recommend this charm-

ing little song to all mezzo-soprani. The poetry, author anonymous, is as charming as the music, and shall speak for itself:—

‘ I went to gather heartsease  
When the bright sun sank to rest,  
Drawing all his sheaves of sunlight  
To his garner in the west.  
When the blossoms and the leaves,  
Losing all their golden glow,  
In the slowly gathering twilight,  
Faintly flutter’d to and fro.

All the ground was starred with mayblooms,  
Everywhere they met my eye;  
But I went to gather heartsease,  
So I passed all others by.  
Oh ! my heart was ne’er so joyous  
As it was in those glad hours,  
When I wandered light and careless  
Near the woodside gath’ring flowers.

Then I gave them all to you, dear,  
And I looked up in your face,  
And I wonder’d I could fancy  
That the flow’rs had any grace.  
*Then* it was I gather’d heartsease,  
*Then* it was, dear heart, I found  
That the glory of the mayblooms  
Did not lie upon the ground.’”

After writing this song I composed another,  
“Far away from thee,” words by Mrs. Nannie

Lambert, and it was published by Cramers'. I was away on opera tours at the time, and had no chance of sending a copy to various musical papers, therefore have no notice of it. But another song I composed afterwards, "My Love," words by Samuel Smiles Jerdan, was published by Hutchings & Romer, and I have a notice of it, but unfortunately the name of the paper is not written on it, so I cannot be sure who wrote the article, which I insert now:—"In 'I love my love' we have a very acceptable addition to our collection of drawing-room songs. The words, it will be remembered, appeared in our columns some time ago as a reprint from the *Scotsman*, and they are the third of Mr. Jerdan's verses which have received a musical setting. The composer is a lady well known to the musical world as a contralto vocalist of high standing. A number of Miss Palmer's previous works have been well received, and the popularity no doubt greatly increased by the composer's rendering of the songs. One would naturally expect that the style of music to the words under notice would have been of the jubilant order, but the plaintive has been preferred, and the choice is happy. In subdued joy the theme is written with a plaintiveness which is pleasing, and a fitting climax is found in the more impassioned repetition of the refrain at the close. The accom-

paniment is moderately difficult, and the compass of the song brings it within the reach of all." Strangely, I found a notice, after writing this, in *Public Opinion*, of "Far away from thee":—"From Messrs. J. B. Cramer & Co. (201 Regent Street, W.)—'Far away from thee,' words by Nannie Lambert, music by Bessie Palmer, is a taking melody tastefully accompanied, in the key of E flat, and proves the composer's knowledge of vocal requirements." Though I wrote many more songs, I think I did not have more printed than those just introduced; and one song, finished in 1900, "Crossing the Bar," words by Tennyson, I still hope to publish. Many who have heard it were very much interested in it. Charles Durand appreciated it very highly. So many songs have been brought out with the same words that two publishers objected to bring out another musical setting of the same poetry. Still I look forward to the hope of my last song being known.



## CHAPTER X.

AFTER my *début* in the *Messiah* at St. Martin's Hall, December 20th, 1854, I was constantly engaged to sing in oratorios in and out of London, and sang almost always with Mr. Sims Reeves. This led to my becoming very intimate with him, his wife, and family, after a few years, and I visited them constantly at 99 Inverness Terrace, Bayswater. In 1860 Mr. Reeves commenced playing in *Robin Hood*, composed by Mr. George Macfarren, at Her Majesty's Theatre; and when beginning to study it Sims Reeves begged me to help him to learn it by heart, by playing the accompaniments as often as I could spare the time to go to Inverness Terrace. When he began learning *Faust*—Gounod's lovely opera—in 1862, and *The Amber Witch*, by Vincent Wallace, I used to go and work hard with him, being so much interested in his beautiful singing and in the music. Often when we both sang at concerts in the country Mr. Reeves begged me to play his accompaniments of well-known songs, as he felt he could not depend on the

country accompanists, so many were utterly unfit to play for great, good artists, for they often played out of time, and paid no attention to the *pianos* or *fortes*.



J. SIMS REEVES.

Photo by H. J. Whitlock.

*Faust* was magnificently sung by Mr. Reeves, not only from the rich, sympathetic tone of his voice, but by the grand breadth of style and real expression in the character. His voice sounded then (in 1860) just as fine as when singing Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, December 6th, 1847, when he first appeared in opera in England, after his studies in France and Italy. The *Times* had the following notice on the 7th December of his first appearance:—

“But the most remarkable event of the evening was the *début* of Mr. Sims Reeves in the character of Edgardo. So rare a success has seldom been achieved by an English vocalist. To a voice of excellent quality, flexible in the highest degree, he adds

the advantage of sedulous study in Italy, and comes before the public with all the style of an Italian singer. The duet in the first act shows the complete management of the voice and the ability of the artist to adapt it to the softest expression of tenderness, but it left an impression that he would scarcely be equal to the terrible passion of the second Act. But this Act was his triumph. The malediction, delivered with the greatest force, took the audience completely by surprise, and the zeal with which he abandoned himself to the strong emotion of the scene produced an electrical effect. We have seldom seen so much passion so naturally assumed. It was Edgar himself, with all his native fierceness and all his torments. The sorrows of the third Act were rendered with the most touching pathos and with the nicest skill, the *piano* being sustained perfectly. At the fall of the curtain the first impulse of the audience was a universal cry of 'Reeves!'

"We repeat, that no opera in the English language has—at least within the memory of present audiences—been so completely executed, and that all attempts to institute comparisons are simply ridiculous."

One day, when I was at 99 Inverness Terrace, I met there Mr. Reeves's elder sister, Mrs. Vesey, and wishing to know when his birthday was, I

asked her, and she said: "Ah! Johnnie was born October 21st, 1821;" so I have never believed in the different accounts of dates that have been published, some saying he was born September 26th, 1818, which is most decidedly untrue, as his elder sister would certainly not have stated a wrong date and year. All his family said the same as his sister; so it is evidently quite true. It is curious that many people always seem to wish that well-known artists should be declared to be much older than they really are. The following letter is one he wrote to me in 1860, while he was singing in *Robin Hood* at Her Majesty's Theatre:—

*Friday morning.*

MY DEAR BESSIE,—Mrs. Reeves, as is usual with her, is now trotting about, occupied with something necessary to keep the steam up—more oil, *alias* aconite; more resin, *alias* nux vomica, etc. etc. etc. So I have taken upon myself the awful responsibility of answering your very kind note. We are indeed sorry that you have such wretched weather; it makes me perfectly miserable.

We have missed you very much, and wished, over and over, that we could see your dear old face again. Emma took some tickets to your Mamma yesterday, although they made a great favour of giving any away, as there was such an enormous

house again; there is scarcely a place to be had for to-morrow and Tuesday next.

Tell Miss Bramwell, with my kind remembrances, that she is a darling muff, and we must get on without her patronage; and had I been with you yesterday I should have confined her under lock and key. The idea of her going out in such a hurricane! The weather keeps me in a perpetual state of nervousness and fright, fearing I may catch cold and knock up.

I hope, dear Bessie, you continue your homeopathic (an "h" too much—scratch him out!).

I fear we shall not be able to come to Brighton, as we cannot get our own rooms at the hotel. We will write still, should we come. Our united love, and kind regards to Miss Bramwell. And believe me,

Yours most sincerely,

J. SIMS REEVES.

On the front page of Mr. Reeves's letter Mrs. Reeves wrote a few lines, crossing the commencement of the page, as follows:—

DEAR BESSIE,—Just returned. We shall not, I am sorry to say, come to Eastbourne this week: not any trains on Sunday except at eight in the morning and at night, which would never do for Mr. Reeves; and at Brighton all *our* hotels are full. I will explain all when I see you. Come to us on Wednesday.

Yours,

EMMA.

A little time before this Mr. Reeves had taken an interest in homeopathy, and was attended by Dr. Laurie, a very clever physician; and he advised me to try it myself, which I did for some time, and found it had very good effect on me when I took bad colds, etc. But, unfortunately, poor Dr. Laurie died very suddenly; so I lost his most careful and improving recipes. When Mr. Reeves wrote this letter I had gone to Brighton to stay with Miss Bramwell, and it happened that a terrifically windy day came on, which would have kept me indoors had I not been staying with her, as she did not fear riding on horseback in strong cutting winds as I did, on account of my voice. I forget to what Mr. Reeves alluded in saying they must get on without her patronage; possibly she did not like *Robin Hood*, in which he was making a great success, and so would not care to go and hear the opera.

In 1856 we were living for a short time in King Street, Covent Garden, and on March 4th that year Covent Garden Opera House was burned to the ground. We heard nothing of it till the next morning; then my brother Robert rushed off to see the ruins of that well-known edifice, and brought me back a playbill he found lying on the ground, of *Les Huguenots*, 1849, June 2nd, with Grisi as Valentina, Madame Dorus Gras as Margarita di

Valois; Urbano, Mdlle. Angri; Raoul de Naugis, Mario; The Huguenot Soldier, Mr. Sims Reeves; Conte di San Bris, Signor Tagliafico; Conte de Nevers, M. Massol; and Marcello, Signor Marini. Under the programme of the characters was the following announcement:—"To render the performance of this opera as complete as possible, the directors have the pleasure to announce that Mr. SIMS REEVES has kindly consented to sing the couplets of the Huguenot Soldier, Rataplan, in the second Act." On the other side is announced the last appearance but three of Madame Persiani. On Thursday, May 31st, *Don Giovanni*, with Grisi, Corbari, and Persiani; Signori Mario, Tamburini, Tagliafico, Polonini, and Marini as Leporello. The last-named was very fine as Marcello in *Les Huguenots*, but Lablache's Leporello made every one else's seem so tame and poor; and Marini played serious parts better than comic, he had so little humour. His singing and performing of Marcello in *Les Huguenots* was very good, and I often saw him in that fascinating opera. Of course I showed the slightly-burned programme to Mr. Reeves when I became so friendly with him and Mrs. Reeves. Many times at their house, 99 Inverness Terrace, Bayswater, I used to meet J. L. Hatton, Vincent Wallace, Michael Balfe, Signor Piatti (the splendid violoncellist), and the critics of



the *Athenæum* and *Times*, Henry F. Chorley and J. W. Davison, whose clever wife, Arabella Goddard, I still have the pleasure of seeing whenever I go to Folkestone, where she lives now (1902). I also used to see there very often Mr. Frederic Beale, the head of Cramers' musical business, a very bright, interesting man; and Mr. Charles Kenny, a clever writer, who often gave lectures on musical composers. I think about 1861 he begged me to sing at a lecture he gave at the London Mechanics' Institution, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane. I happen to have a short notice of this lecture, so will give it here:—

“A very interesting lecture upon the life, character, and genius of the great composer Beethoven was delivered last night at the London Mechanics' Institution, Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, by Mr. C. Kenny. The lecturer gave a deeply-interesting biographical sketch of Beethoven's career; of the lights and shadows of his strange and chequered life, of his physical peculiarities and mental eccentricities, interspersed with personal anecdotes illustrative of the singular idiosyncrasies of his nature. The lecturer also gave a very learned and able, but at the same time popular, commentary upon the leading works of his distinguished subject, and pointed out the



various beauties of his nobler works in a clear and agreeable style. Miss Palmer, Miss Eliza Hughes, and Mr. Allen rendered most valuable assistance by the able manner in which they rendered some of the finest works of the great master, including the celebrated cantata of *Adelaida* and the 'Marcel-line Song.' Miss Palmer's fine contralto voice in the *morceau* 'In questa tomba' gained an encore. Master Harrison performed a sonata upon the pianoforte in so praiseworthy a manner as to elicit general applause; and, indeed, the whole entertainment afforded the greatest gratification to a numerous and most respectable audience. The lecturer concluded by announcing a similar illustration of the life and genius of Mendelssohn."

In 1850 Mr. Sims Reeves appeared at Her Majesty's Opera House in *Ernani*, Mademoiselle Parodi taking the principal soprano part. One night I went with my father, a private box being lent to him for the evening by the brother-in-law of Mr. Lumley, Mr. Sloman. The opera went on very well, and at the end I witnessed a most fortunate escape of our great tenor from what must have been a most serious accident. In the last scene Ernani kills himself, and Mr. Reeves fell so near where the curtain would drop, that, as it came rolling heavily down, some one from the left wing rushed forward and dragged him back as he lay

prostrate, just in time to escape the massive weight of the curtain on his head.

In 1851 Mr. Reeves sang Florestan in *Fidelio*, and Sophie Cruvelli took the part of Leonora, both singing splendidly. The chorus of prisoners was immensely improved by Gardoni, Calzolari, Pardini, Massol, F. Lablache, Ferranti, and Lorenzo, all well educated singers, helping in that particular chorus. It was curious to note how sympathetic the music sounded in that chorus with those well-produced voices working their best to realise the pathos of those poor prisoners, instead of the shouting and yelling by the hard, forced, and worn-out voices of the usual chorus-singers. One day Mr. Reeves told me the date of his first singing in oratorio—it was about the beginning of 1848, and the work was *Judas Maccabæus*, given at Exeter Hall, and performed under the conducting of Mr. John Hullah, “an excellent musician, a thorough gentleman, and an enthusiastic lover of music,” said Mr. Reeves, which greatly pleased me, as I felt very much interested in Mr. Hullah myself, and was greatly charmed with his interesting song, “The Storm,” which he dedicated to me, and which I have sung constantly; even now, old as I am, I sing it at concerts when for some charitable object. Mr. Reeves showed me a notice in the *Musical World*

of his first singing in oratorios, and I re-print it, as it proves how appreciated his fine singing was.

"Mr. Reeves," said the *Musical World*, "was listened to with great anxiety. His declamatory powers in recitative singing no one could doubt, but it was feared his operatic style would not happily consort with the solidity and breadth of Handel's music. Besides this, the songs for the principal tenor parts in *Judas Maccabæus* were written in the composer's peculiar florid style, and required a flexibility of voice that few who had heard Mr. Reeves in *Lucia* or the *Maid of Honour* had given him credit for. Nevertheless, Mr. Reeves soon set aside all fears on that score, and proved himself in nowise less efficient in the interpretation of Handel's music than in that of Donizetti or Balfe. In the two florid songs, 'Call forth thy powers,' and 'Sound an alarm,' which require great flexibility and rapid enunciation, he was admirable. Nor was he less happy in the beautiful air, 'How vain is man,' which was given with the utmost expression, and exhibited his *cantabile* to perfection. Mr. Reeves obtained enthusiastic demonstrations from the audience after each song."

Then Mr. Reeves accepted an engagement from the Sacred Harmonic Society, and sang the *Judas Maccabæus* at their opening concert. At the

London Wednesday Concerts he once sang a duet with the old tenor Braham. I was there with my father, and was charmed with Sims Reeves's lovely voice, which told splendidly, although he did not attempt, as he easily might have done, to outshine the veteran, whose voice was naturally lacking in richness of quality; and Braham, in private, congratulated him on his fine style and good tone. The first photo I had of him is that printed on page 176.

One evening, at a concert in Birmingham about 1859, I think, a most droll affair occurred. Madame Rudersdorff, Mr. Sims Reeves, myself, and some other artistes whose names I forget, were singing, and during the "wait" after the first part was over, Madame Rudersdorff came to me and began whispering something interesting to me. I could not hear her very distinctly, so bent forward a little closer to her and she did the same to me. I had a wreath of gold leaves on my head and, to her horror, the fluffy curls on her forehead caught in the gilt leaves of my wreath. I tried to draw back from her, but she exclaimed, "No, no; pray don't move!" Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves were both watching us, and they discovered by Madame Rudersdorff's holding her hair so carefully, that it was a wig I had nearly dragged off by my wreath thus catching it. Every one present was

immensely amused by the droll event. It was with great difficulty Madame Rudersdorff at last disentangled her wig from the wreath on my head without tearing it off her own.

In 1861 I was introduced to Mr. Mitchell by Mr. Sims Reeves, and he engaged me to sing with Madame Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt at all her oratorio concerts, both in London and in the well-known towns—Manchester, Liverpool, Bradford, etc. Sims Reeves sang at nearly all her concerts; Signor Belletti also, whether oratorios or usual concerts; and Wilbye Cooper and Lewis Thomas sang at some of the oratorios. Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, Jenny Lind's clever husband, was conductor at all and managed them very well. Just lately he sent me the nice photograph of his wife which I feel very delighted to have for reproduction in this book, in addition to the photos of Mr. Sims Reeves, Madame Tietjens (who sent me her own photo, with the kind little message written by herself), J. L. Hatton, the charming composer of such original melodies, several of which he dedicated to me, and several other photos of well-known singers.

Madame Jenny Lind was always very kind to me when I sang with her in the oratorios so constantly. When we were at the rehearsal she begged the assistant of the platform to take care

to place nice warm little mats both for me and herself. Turning to me, she said, "You know, dear



*Mrs. Jenny Lind*

Photo by C. E. Fry & Son.

Miss Palmer, if your feet are cold it affects your voice, so do place them on the warm mat." One night when we were singing—I think, at Liverpool—Lord Dudley brought in a large, fine bouquet for Mme. Goldschmidt. The instant he brought it to her she hastily said, "Thank you very much, my Lord, but pray take it out

of the room *at once!*" Lord Dudley glared at her most defiantly, and went out of the room with a disgusted air. When he returned, Madame



Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt spoke most anxiously to him: "Ah! dear Lord Dudley, pray forgive me for sending the lovely flowers away for the present; but the strong perfume has such a terrible effect on my voice, that I dare not have them in the room at all when I am engaged to sing, though I shall be delighted to have them at the hotel when I leave here." Madame Goldschmidt was quite right, for the strong perfumes of some flowers are very distressing to the throat, and naturally make the voice quite husky.

On July 3rd, 1862, my annual concert, which in 1859 and 1860 took place at St. Martin's Hall, was at St. James's Hall, and Mr. Sims Reeves sang again for me, and was in fine voice. Miss Banks and Lewis Thomas also sang, and Charles Hallé, Anna Molique, and Herr Molique played. It was a most interesting programme.

On July 23rd, the same year, Mr. Reeves gave a grand concert at Exeter Hall, introducing a cantata by M. Balfe, called *Mazeppa*, in which Madame Lemmens Sherrington, I, Mr. Reeves, and Mr. Santley all sang, with choruses occasionally. In the second part I sang "When I was young," by H. F. Chorley, which was enthusiastically encored. Signor Piatti played splendidly, and Mr. Reeves was in magnificent voice, while Charles Hallé played charmingly.

In September 1862, Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves took me with them to Ilkley for a change of air, and while we were there a concert was got up at the Ilkley Bath Charitable Institution, we three were entreated to sing, the only other items being the chorus-singing of the Leeds Choral Society, with Mr. R. S. Burton as the conductor. It was a most successful affair, and went off charmingly. Soon after I had to leave, as I had other engagements; and one morning Mr. and Mrs. Reeves were walking over the moor, when a Yorkshireman on horseback made his way to Mr. Reeves and spoke most energetically and delightedly about the concert, thanking him for his grand singing. Then he said, "And is that sweet girl, Miss Palmer, still here?" So Mr. Reeves told him I had left for some other concerts, and the Yorkshireman drew out a large packet of Everton toffee and entreated Mr. Reeves to give it to me when he next met me. It was not very long afterwards that I went to Inverness Terrace to see them on their return, and Mr. Reeves laughed as he handed me the parcel, saying, "Bessie, here's a delightful present for you, from Ilkley."

In September 1864 Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves went for a change to Beddgelert, and asked me to go and stay with them; it was a charming place,



so picturesque and interesting, and the walks round about were delightful. I had to return home early in October, so sent a pair of slippers I had worked and had got mounted for wear, in time for Mr. Reeves's birthday, October 21st, and I received this nice letter thanking me for my gift:—

BEDDGELERT,

*October 21st, 1864.*

MY DEAR BESSIE,—Thank you sincerely for your charming present. The slippers are the prettiest by far that you have made me, and, I am happy to tell you, are universally admired; I shall think of you and wish you all happiness. I was very sorry to hear of your Mamma's indisposition, and most sincerely hope she will soon be quite herself again. Give her our very kind love, and say how sorry we are: *all* have hope she will soon be quite well again.

We have had Mrs. Jones and her brother on a visit to us. They have been very kind—you know they are the owners of most part of the property about here. Some people from Liverpool have been staying here at the hotel, and have been boring us a good deal. You know how much I prefer quiet and solitude, but I have not had as much as I could wish.

We are not going to the P——'s after all: he is

called away unexpectedly to London. I need not tell you how pleased I am to be released from this tiresome visit.

How sorry I am, dear Bessie, you gave up your trip to this lovely spot. Madame Patti is here now, and will remain within a day or two of our departure. You know she has so many friends in these parts; she is going on a round of visits after leaving us. We have had some wet days—to-day is dreadfully so—cannot stir out. Will you thank your Papa for so kindly sending the papers? And with united love from all, again thanking you for your charming and most acceptable present,

Ever yours sincerely,

SIMS REEVES.

When I determined to start in English operas of course I had to give up concerts generally, consequently I missed meeting Mr. Sims Reeves after August 1870, and very seldom had the pleasure of seeing him after that date. My engagements lasted a very long time, and were always in country towns, so I was seldom in London; and as Mr. Sims Reeves bought a charming house—Grange Mount, Beulah Spa, Upper Norwood, and took up his residence there, I very seldom had the time to see him. But he continued singing at concerts, sometimes being too unwell to carry them out; and Charles Hallé still

continued to engage me for his concerts in Manchester, where I had the pleasure of hearing Sims Reeves sing as finely as ever. In 1868 it was my good fortune to hear him sing magnificently at the Handel Triennial Festival, in *Israel in Egypt*, on June 19th. The song "The enemy said" was tremendously encored by the audience, and he sang it again most beautifully. In the *Times* of the 20th of June was a grand notice of the whole oratorio, and specially alluding to Mr. Reeves's grand singing. I reproduce that part of the notice :—

"The two airs, 'Thou didst blow' for soprano, and 'Thou shalt bring them in' for contralto, were respectively assigned to Mdlle. Tietjens and Madame Sainton-Dolby. The first, which, in addition to its melodious beauty, is remarkable for one of the most ingenious examples of Handel's employment of the ancient expedient of a 'ground bass,' was admirably given by Mdlle. Tietjens, the second with true Handelian expression by Madame Sainton, one of the most experienced of Handelian singers. But at this Festival, as at every Handel Festival that has been held, beginning with the bold experiment in 1857, the sensation of the week was produced by 'The enemy said: I will pursue, I will overtake,' an air which Mr. Sims Reeves has made his own, and which to sing after him would

be an ungrateful task for any other living tenor. This superb air was, if possible, sung yesterday by Mr. Reeves more magnificently than on any previous occasion—magnificently as, we need scarcely remind our musical readers, he has so often sung it. He gave it, indeed, with a power of voice, a vigorous accent, a truth of intonation, a fluency, sustained from end to end, a fire and an enthusiasm which we never remember excelled. Every phrase had its well-expressed meaning; every note told—even in the most rapid enunciation of *bravura* passages. Its effect was literally ‘electrical,’ and at the end a storm of applause broke out from every part of the building, in which the singers and players in the orchestra unanimously joined. To resist the ‘*encore*’ under such circumstances was impossible, even for Mr. Reeves the avowed enemy of *encores*, and the air was repeated with the same power and unflagging animation as before. A more marked impression was never produced by a solo performance. The 20,000 rose at Mr. Reeves, as the pit, according to Edmund Kean, on some memorable occasion, ‘rose at Edmund Kean.’”

In all the Handel Festivals at the Crystal Palace, from 1857 to 1877, Mr. Reeves sang each time. Afterwards he refused to take any part, unless the abnormally high pitch constantly used

by Mr. (afterwards Sir Michael) Costa was reduced to the so-called "Normal pitch" of the French and other Continental nations. Costa was very determined not to lower the pitch, which certainly was much too high for all voices, and it took many years to improve it. Now, I am glad to find, most pianos are kept to the "Medium" pitch. Some years back I found it very difficult to sing to various pianos, as many were pitched so high; and now, I must confess, I sometimes find pianos a whole tone below the Medium pitch, or even lower than that!

Years ago I was talking to Mr. Reeves about seeing him at Drury Lane when I was only eleven years old, when he sang the "Come, if you dare" in Purcell's *King Arthur*, and how delighted I was with the lovely voice of the unknown "Mr. J. Reeves," who I then heard for the first time. He laughed, and told me all about Macready's extraordinary behaviour to him. He related how he was engaged as second tenor, and sang the part of Ottocar in *Der Freischütz*; afterwards, too, he sang in *King Arthur*. Unfortunately, Macready made the enemies stand quite in the rear, and as Mr. Reeves's song, "Come, if you dare," was defiance to them, he could not sing as decidedly with his voice effective to the audience by having to look naturally at his foes; but he tried to

arrange so that he stood sideways, allowing his voice to tell thoroughly into the ears of the audience. Of course Macready ought to have arranged for the enemies to enter from the side wing, but he would not do it, and at the end of the performance he fell into a terrific rage and gave Mr. Reeves his dismissal. Not long, though, after his absence from the theatre, Macready sent for him and asked him to resume his broken engagement, but on conditions arranged by the manager, tyrannic as he was. He insisted too, that as Mr. Reeves had disobeyed his orders, he must pay a fine of five pounds, so Mr. Reeves was unwillingly mulcted in this amount, was permitted to again play the part of Ottocar, and to sing, more or less with his back to the audience, Purcell's fine war-song. In vain did Mr. Reeves remonstrate with Macready, and the young singer ended by saying that though he was only commencing his career, he might some day be in as great a position as *his*, and then he would feel determined to show his sense of the manager's conduct in a befitting manner. Very many years after, when Macready was retiring from the stage, he arranged a farewell benefit, and asked Mr. Sims Reeves to sing for him. "I declined to do so," said Mr. Reeves to me, "and did not fail to remind him of the disagreeable cir-

cumstances which compelled me to pursue this course."

It was just after this uncomfortable engagement in 1842 that Mr. Reeves, as already related, went to Paris to take lessons of Signor Bordogni. The famous tenor never tired of expressing the obligations he was under for his Italian training. This reminds me that La Scala is the finest opera-house in Milano, or Milan—which opera-house I went to from Cimiez, to hear Verdi's then quite new opera, *Falstaff*, on March 25th, 1893. I arrived the day before, for it was a long journey, and I much enjoyed the principal part, *Falstaff*, sung and played perfectly by M. Maurel. The next day, Sunday, I went into the fine Duomo, and afterwards walked up the high stairs to the top of the roof and tower. The view of the decoration of the roof was immensely interesting, such a marvel of statues standing all over it, and so well sculptured. Thirty-five hundred statues decorated the cathedral inside and out! The following day I went to Pavia to see the Certosa—a most interesting place—a mass of exquisite carvings, and fine pictures by great old painters. It had been a monastery, but was then converted into almost a museum. On each side of the cathedral part of the building there were most beautifully carved things, and painted pictures in





EXTERIOR OF THE CERTOSA CATHEDRAL IN PAVIA.





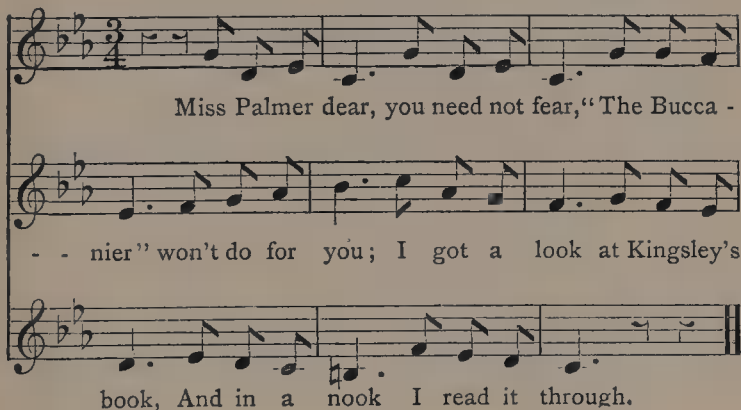
MAUSOLEO DI GIOVANNI GALEAZZO, PAVIA CATHEDRAL.

the numerous little chapels; all the altars were exquisitely decorated. The "Mausoleo di Giovanni Galeazzo" is in the interior of the Certosa Cathedral, and is very fascinating, so I introduce, just as a view of part of the Certosa, a very good reproduction of the exterior, and also one of the tomb of Giovanni Galeazzo.

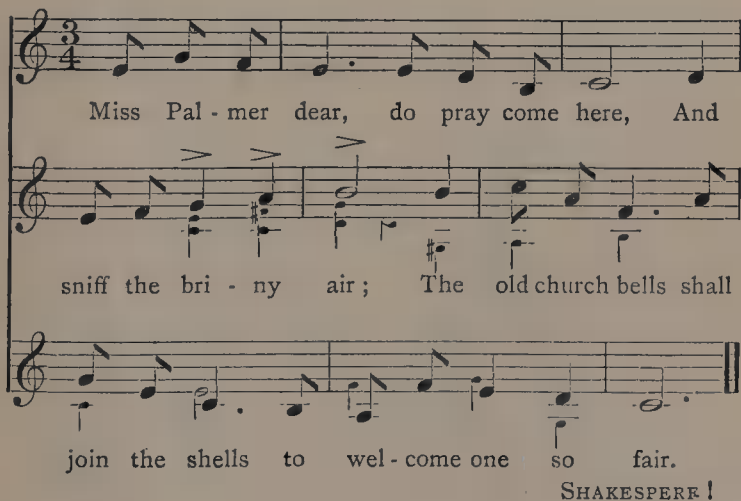
I wrote on page 187 of J. L. Hatton being such a clever, amusing, and musical man. I often met him at Sims Reeves's. I should like now to name some of his most popular songs. "Good-bye, Sweetheart, good-bye!" sung often by Mr. Reeves, was also sung a few times by Signor Mario. Hatton often met me at Sims Reeves's, and asked me many times to look for some interesting poetry and to send it to him, so that he might write some songs for me. Several he composed for me were most successful. "The Sailor's Wife," "Rescued," "Come to me, oh ye children," "Save, Father, on the Sea," "Curfew" were all much liked; and Herrick's "Letanie" was very interesting. "To Anthea" was constantly sung by Charles Santley; even now (1904) we have the pleasure of his delightful singing of that charming melody and fine poetry. J. L. Hatton composed some most clever quartets and a cantata, *Hezekiah*. He used to engage me often for some of the City Com-

panies' grand dinners, given occasionally during the year; and I now give three of his amusing letters, with their quaint musical messages:—

3 GOSWELL STREET, E.C.,  
*July 13th, 1860.*



Miss Palmer dear, you need not fear, "The Bucca -  
- nier" won't do for you; I got a look at Kingsley's  
book, And in a nook I read it through.



Miss Pal - mer dear, do pray come here, And  
sniff the bri - ny air; The old church bells shall  
join the shells to wel - come one so fair.  
SHAKESPERE!

3 GOSWELL STREET, E.C.,

13<sup>th</sup> July 1860.

I've got a song of Thackeray's, which I intend to make the *very best* I ever wrote, but I shall wait until I get a first-rate inspiration. I hope you will come "down" to Margate—*do—do—do*. I'm off in ten minutes to that fair place, to my dear little boys.

Yours faithfully,

J. L. HATTON.

In the next letter Mr. Hatton talks of two engagements he had made for me singing at City dinners, the second of which was to take place at the large Hotel at Richmond, and ends with a droll little melody and comic poem:—

18 UNION CRESCENT, MARGATE,

July 29, 1860.

MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—Enclosed is a programme of the business of the 2nd August. Let me have the pleasure of seeing you at seven o'clock. Where have you been to? It seems an age since I saw you. We shall have "Baby mine" on the 16th at Richmond. Do you intend to honour this poor place with the light of your countenance this summer? Why don't you and Miss Bramwell make up your minds to a trip at once? Charming air—beautiful ocean—shrimps in perfection—fine for breakfast.

I dined yesterday with a friend of your father—a

Mr. George of Goldsmith's Hall. With kindest regards, believe me, most faithfully yours,

J. L. HATTON.

P.S.—Favour me with a line.

Even after I had begun singing in English opera tours, which commenced in August 1870, I was often asked by Mr. Hatton to sing still at City dinners, and in 1872 he wrote the following note to me:—

NAPIER HOUSE, MARGATE,

8th May 1872.

MY DEAR MISS PALMER, — Can you come to Skinner's Hall on Thursday, the 6th June? The Committee will be much pleased—I need scarcely say, *so shall I*—to hear you on that occasion. An early reply, *s'il vous plait*.—Yours faithfully,

J. L. HATTON.

For many years after this I continued to be engaged by Mr. Hatton, though sometimes I could not accept his proffered engagements, being so constantly away in the country, and also in Scotland and Ireland, with Charles Durand's company, or Henry Walsham's, singing in English operas. These London City Company's banquets are very lavish concerns. Of course, the artists do not sit down to the dinners or they would never be able to sing! Liberal refreshments, however, are always thoughtfully provided.

Long after Hatton's death in September 1886 I went to Mentone for change of air and scene (about 1895), and while there went over to Cannes to be introduced to George H. Hatton, the son, who now lives in Cannes, owing to the delicacy of his health. G. H. Hatton plays the



J. L. HATTON.

Photo by Watkins.

piano most beautifully, and has written some very nice songs, one of which he sent to me. It is good to meet dear old Hatton's son occasionally at my friends', the Beetons, house in Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead, and whenever I visit Mentone always go to Cannes to see him. Here I am glad to introduce J. L. Hatton's portrait at his best among the many other well-

known musical artists and composers.

In 1868 Mr. Reeves was very much concerned about the increasing rise in the pitch, for in the December of that year he wrote a letter on the subject to the Editor of the *Athenæum*, and commenced by stating how interested he was in the Editor's comment upon Miss Hauck's Amina



at Covent Garden, "that it is high time the pitch of our orchestras should be adapted to the Normal diapason" used in France and Germany. He spoke, too, of the great effect that would be produced by the Editor protesting against "the human voice—the most delicate of all instruments—being sacrificed to the false brilliancy attained by perpetually forcing up the pitch." Mr. Reeves also asserted that some time before this date he intimated to the Committee of the Sacred Harmonic Society his final decision not to sing for that Society so long as the pitch of the orchestra was maintained at its present height, until it was assimilated to the normal diapason of France. Some time afterwards Mr. Sims Reeves wrote again to the *Athenæum*, and I produce part of his interesting writing:—

"1. I really cannot take upon myself the credit for the reduction of organ pitch at Birmingham, because it is notorious that this was an absolute necessity (and letters in my possession from the managers prove it), in order to conform the pitch to the reduced one at Drury Lane. 2. I can undertake to prove, if need be, by the works in my possession, that the pitch in Italy and Germany has never been so high as that of Sir Michael Costa. I may mention in this connection that my esteemed friend Herr Joachim plays on a different

violin in Germany, with thicker strings. Here he brings one with thinner strings to suit the abnormal pitch."

When the Handel Festival of 1877 took place Sir Michael Costa insisted on maintaining the high pitch to which Mr. Reeves had so often objected, and to which he refused to conform. The *Pall Mall Gazette* spoke very distinctly of the "terrible question of pitch," and I give a short notice:—"If the appearance of Mdlle. Albani in oratorio was the greatest positive novelty in yesterday's performance, there was a novelty also of a negative kind which cannot be passed over. Mr. Sims Reeves, our greatest singer, and one who is especially great in sacred music, was not among the artists engaged; though, in justice to the directors of the Festival, it must be added that he was one of the first to whom an engagement was offered. That terrible question of 'pitch,' which has caused so much annoyance, and which might be so easily settled by our conforming in England, as in all the principal Continental countries, to the 'normal diapason' of France, is understood to have been connected with Mr. Sims Reeves's unwillingness to sing. To replace the first of living tenors was rather a formidable undertaking."

In 1878, towards the end of the year, and at the beginning of 1879, Mr. Reeves had a great triumph



at Covent Garden in the *Beggars' Opera*, *The Waterman*, and several other English works. In his *Life* there is a nice appendix of a notice from the *Aberdeen Journal* of Mr. Reeves's first appearance in that city at the Theatre Royal, on September 25th, 1843. The journal said:—"Up went the curtain; a piano was drawn well down to the footlights, and, with a bow, a keen-faced, dark-haired, handsome young man took his place thereat. This was Mr. John Reeves; and what a night of mirth and music followed! Regarding the career of Mr. Sims Reeves little requires to be said. His fame is known to every intelligent lover of song in, we may say, all English-speaking lands. In the year of his first visit to Aberdeen he had just reached manhood, and his voice was of singular beauty, fine compass, and great power. He had not, of course, acquired the intensity of touching expression, the finished artistic management of tone, with that perfect method of phrasing that time and study brought in such rich measure; but, as already said, there was a charm, a feeling of freshness about his singing in now-distant 1843 which no after-efforts have effaced. Mr. Reeves did a right good night's work on that 25th September. Altogether, then, the first evening of Mr. Sims Reeves in Aberdeen was a musical event to be cherished, and it is pleasant to anticipate

that his last appearance will be worthy of profitable remembrance. Charles Lamb, in writing of a favourite performer of his day, who had been before the public for many years, turned a graceful



J. SIMS REEVES.

Photo by R. W. Thrupp.

sentence by referring to 'a voice unstrung by age.' There is no doubt a long, distinct span between 1843 and 1881, yet we fancy it will be found that the genial remark of the gentle Elia applies with surprising force to Mr. Sims Reeves should he to-night sing the choice ballad of his early days—Sir Henry Bishop's always charming and ever-chaste 'Pretty Jane.'"

From 1880-84 Mr. Reeves was singing constantly, both in London and in country towns, sometimes at concerts, and often in English operas. When he sang April 20th, 23rd, and 24th, 1880, at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Birmingham, the first night he played in Dibdin's amusing nautical

operetta, *The Waterman*. The *Birmingham Daily Gazette* gave a very nice notice as follows:—  
“The creator of the part of Tom Tug, when the piece was first brought out at the Haymarket in 1774, was Charles Banister, and amongst artists who have since impersonated the champion of the oars are reckoned Braham, Incledon, and many others who have left famous names. Not one, however, of the Tom Tugs of the last half-century at least, has had so much success in the part as Mr. Sims Reeves. Of the songs Mr. Reeves introduces, two, ‘The Jolly Young Waterman,’ and ‘Then farewell, my trim-built wherry,’ belong to the piece, and are Dibdin’s compositions; the other two, ‘The Bay of Biscay’ and ‘Rule Britannia,’ are taken from dramatic pieces by John Davy and Dr. Arne. These ballads were last night given with all the refinement and feeling which Mr. Sims Reeves unfailingly imparts to his essays. The hushed attention with which ‘Then farewell, my trim-built wherry’ was listened to, showed how anxious the whole of the immense audience were to catch the full meaning and intent of every expressive phrase, and the uproarious burst of applause which followed the ‘Bay of Biscay’ again proved how thoroughly the interpretations of the dear old English songs had been enjoyed. Mr. Sims Reeves was indeed in fine voice, and

if it be possible so to suppose he still continues to advance in all those qualities which make the finished artist."

The Thursday night was also very successful, judging from the most interesting notice of the *Beggars' Opera*, in which Mr. Reeves as usual played Captain Macheath, when the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* gave a very sensible notice of his splendid singing and fine playing. In the September of that year Mr. Sims Reeves was singing in Ireland, and I happen to have notices of his singing with great success at Belfast on September 27th, and at Derry on the 28th; also at Cork on October 1st; at Waterford, the concert took place on October 5th, and at Limerick on the 7th. Herbert Reeves sang at all these concerts, and also at Mr. Nicholson's Annual Grand Concert in Leicester on November 29th—in fact, he sang for a long time with his father. In 1881, Mr. Reeves on Wednesday, April 27th, commenced his farewell oratorios at the Albert Hall, but unfortunately had a sore throat, which prevented him from singing right through *Judas Maccabæus*. On May 2nd, the same year, the *Morning Post* announced that Sims Reeves would next produce *Samson*. On September 26th, the same year, Mr. Reeves in Aberdeen was immensely applauded, and the article in the *Aberdeen Journal*, after speaking well

of the other performers, says:—"It now remains to refer to the great attraction of the evening—Sims Reeves. We yesterday gave a sketch of the distinguished tenor's career, and it is not, therefore, necessary to lengthen the present notice beyond a few remarks on his performances last night. His first appearance on the platform was the signal for a most enthusiastic expression of welcome, which was again and again repeated before he was allowed to proceed with the first song. To it, the expectant audience listened with rapt attention, and although the tone may not have come quite up to the very high anticipations abroad in the hall, the artist was at once distinguished in the delicate phrasing of Balfe's charming melody, 'Come into the garden, Maude.' Nothing could have surpassed the chaste beauty with which he inspired the lines—

'To faint in the light of the sun she loves,  
To faint in the light and to die.'

Then there was—choicest of Bishop's songs—"My Pretty Jane." Many will doubtless consider that the gem of the evening. The same artistic mastery of light and shade and the general *technique* of vocalisation was there also deliciously apparent. The encore which followed was simply not to be withstood, and Mr. Reeves gracefully

responded with a most enjoyable rendering of 'Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye.' The last song by the famous tenor was, beyond all doubt, most successful. In his former efforts, Mr. Reeves seemed to have been reserving his voice, but in this, the last, it rang out with telling, heart-reaching power. The famous artist retired from the platform in the midst of the greatest cheering, many of the audience rising up and waving hats and handkerchiefs under the excitement of the moment. The universal sentiment unmistakably was—

'Happy to meet,  
But sorry to part.'

It has only to be remarked in conclusion that Mr. Naylor's accompaniments throughout were excellent and worthy of the high reputation he bears."

In the Liverpool paper of November 9th, 1881, there is a good notice of Sutherland Edward's *Life and Artistic Career of Sims Reeves*, just then published by Messrs. Tinsley Brothers, commencing with—"John Sims Reeves was born October 21, 1822 [which ought to be 1821], at Shooter's Hill, in Kent. His father was a musician, and the musical genius of the child, born in an atmosphere of sweet sounds, was awakened at a very early age. He possessed a

lovely soprano voice, which, as a boy, he used with extraordinary skill. He had, moreover, the advantage of being from the first well taught, and when he was only fourteen years of age he was able to perform the duties of organist at North Cray Church, in the neighbourhood of his birth-place, where he had also charge of the village choir. The singing-master under whom young Sims Reeves was placed fell into the delusion that he had to deal with a baritone, and it was as a baritone that the admirable tenor of the future studied—and not only studied, but came out on the stage and succeeded. Mr. Reeves learned to play several orchestral instruments, among which may be mentioned the violin, violoncello, oboe, and bassoon. He at the same time studied harmony and counterpoint under Mr. H. Calcott, and the piano under John Cramer. He acquired so much proficiency as a violinist that at the beginning of his public career he was able more than once to undertake the duties of orchestral leader.

#### “FIRST APPEARANCE.

“In 1839 Mr. Sims Reeves, then in his eighteenth year, made his ‘first appearance on any stage’ at the Newcastle-on-Tyne theatre, as the gipsy boy in *Guy Mannering*, for the benefit



of the late tenor George Barker; he afterwards appeared in the character of Count Rodolfo, the travelling nobleman of *La Sonnambula*. Except in the case of Mr. Sims Reeves, one has never heard of a vocalist beginning as a baritone, then rising to the rank of tenor, and afterwards on the heights where tenors love to dwell for a period of forty years. After fulfilling his engagement at Newcastle, Mr. Sims Reeves came to London, and sang for some time at the Grecian Theatre, under the name of 'Mr. Johnson.' He now placed himself under two well-known professors of that time, Mr. Hobbs and Mr. T. Cook; and after a course of training—this time as a tenor—undertook a part, which he succeeded in rendering important, at Drury Lane, then under the direction of Macready. It was an honour then to be engaged at Drury Lane Theatre, no matter in what capacity; and an engagement having been offered to Mr. Sims Reeves as second tenor, he naturally accepted it. To the second tenor were assigned such subordinate characters as that of Ottocar in *Der Freischütz*. Among the parts, however, which fell to the lot of the second tenor was also that of the First Warrior in *King Arthur*; and Mr. Sims Reeves having, as representative of that personage, to sing 'Come, if you dare!' we may be sure that he took advantage of the opportunity. A strange



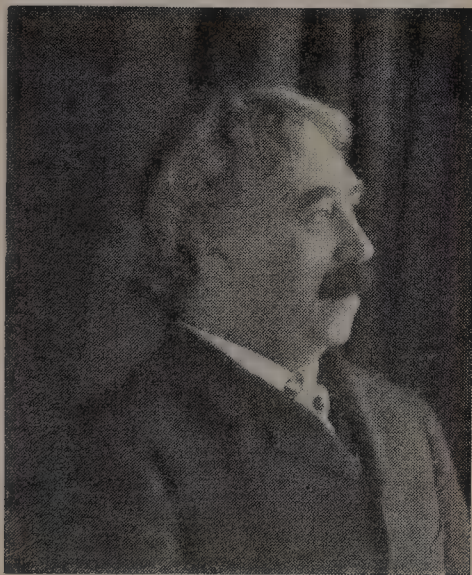
and interesting incident happened to the young tenor while he was playing the part of First Warrior at Drury Lane—an incident which had an effect, and a very happy one, upon his whole life. A gentleman who was an enthusiastic lover of music had heard the performance, and speaking of it to some ladies whom he wished to take to Drury Lane Theatre, said to them, ‘Come and hear a new singer who will be the first tenor in the world.’ A party was formed, and one of the members of it was Miss Lucombe—at that time a student of singing, afterwards a very brilliant singer—who subsequently became the wife of the admired tenor at whose early performance she had been invited to assist. Mr. Sims Reeves sang for two seasons at Drury Lane. On leaving the establishment in 1843, he went to Paris to take lessons. From Paris Mr. Reeves went to Milan, where he studied for some time under Signor Mazzucato.”

For many years Mr. Reeves continued singing most beautifully; even in 1898 I had the great pleasure of hearing him sing at the Queen’s Hall, October 6th, when he sang “Come into the garden, Maud,” and “The Jolly Young Waterman,” which I had so often heard him sing many years ago. In 1895 I heard of his wife, Emma Lucombe, being dead, and was grieved shortly after—about two

months—to hear that he had married again. Shortly after I visited my old friend and colleague, and found him ill in bed. He was now alone, but fortunately his son Herbert and young Mrs. Herbert Reeves both went to live with him. Then one day I went down to Worthing with Herbert to look for a nice place for the poor dear father to stay in during the winter, as the doctor had strongly recommended his going away from Clapham, where he had been living for some time, and where I was grieved to find him so ill and lonely, until Herbert took all care to relieve his depressed and sadly worried life. Dear Mr. Reeves came to see me, Sunday, September 23rd, 1900, before he started for Worthing, and on the 29th he and Herbert went off to the place that was expected to do him so much good; but how unfortunately it turned out! On October 20th that same year I gave a concert in aid of the “Ladies’ League of Kindness,” started some years before by the Hon. Mrs. Randolph Clay, and hoped that Herbert would sing, but he had such a bad cold he could not utter a sound at all, so I persuaded him to go to Worthing to stay with his father on the 21st, Sims Reeves’s famous birthday. He went, and found him very unwell, having gone out for a drive on the 19th in an open carriage. Alas! to all our deep sadness, on the 25th

of October our great artist and dear old friend died. It was a terrible loss to his two daughters, Constance and Maude, and his only son then, Herbert, for his elder, Ernest, had died on January 10th, 1899; and poor Constance, after several operations, died August 15th, 1901: so very sad memories remain of the great, splendid, perfect singer and his family.

After his father's death Herbert brought me a lovely ring, which I had seen on Sims Reeves's finger the night I saw him play Edgardo at Drury Lane Theatre in 1847, a fine turquoise and two diamonds. In the March of



J. SIMS REEVES.

Photo by Elliott & Fry.

1900 I had, through writing to the Minister—the Right Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, M.P., persuaded him to obtain from dear good Queen Victoria the Civil List Pension of £100 for Sims Reeves. It was sad that he benefited from it for so short a time, the poor dear man passing away from us

very soon. That his name will always remain as the greatest and finest singer is certain, and it is to me a real delight to think how constantly I was singing at the same oratorios, festivals, and concerts with the illustrious artist, and knew him and all his family so well. The two youngest, Herbert and Maud, were always my favourites, and it is gratifying to me that I still am friendly with them. Through Sims Reeves's kindness I have had many good photos of him, and introduced some in my pages which will certainly interest those who have so often heard the great singer. It is a positive pleasure to me to see them, even at my old age. The photo inserted on page 217 is the last taken of Sims Reeves, and all friends like to see it, giving as it does the latest presentment of the ever well-known and admired vocal artist.

## CHAPTER XI.

MY first recollection of Baron Bramwell is linked with that of his mother. When I was about four years of age I was taken to a children's party at my uncle Joseph Thomas's house in Finch Lane, City, and Mrs. Bramwell, the mother of the clever barrister George Bramwell, took a fancy to me, so that I was easily coaxed to go to her. Yet she was so dignified, upright, and had such a dictatorial way of speaking, that I was greatly awed, though not so frightened when George Bramwell patted me and smiled. Years after I often met him and his daughters, and in 1860 I used to visit them in Old Palace Yard, where I frequently met his amiable and clever younger brother, Sir Frederick Bramwell, with his delightful wife and family. I had great pleasure, too, in visiting Baron Bramwell's cousins, the Bremners and Friths: the Bremners had a most charming house, Petersham House, and grounds, near Richmond. Unfortunately, when I entered into singing in English operas I had no chance of going to see my friends, as the companies I was engaged

by were constantly travelling from town to town, and from England to Scotland and Ireland. But later on I fortunately revived my friendship with Baron Bramwell, and in 1879 he begged me to be introduced to his second wife, a kind-hearted and bright woman; then I was invited to go and stay with them at his delightful estate, Four Elms, Edenbridge, and we—the Baron and I—played duets on the piano between my songs. He was passionately fond of music, and after being there some time he asked me if I would go with him to the church, very near his charming house. Taking his butler to work as the organ-blower, we used to go through a great deal of music, Baron Bramwell playing for me on the organ the accompaniments of “O rest in the Lord,” from Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Pergolesi’s “O Lord, have mercy,” etc., and even playing some secular but classic songs for me there. Once after leaving Edenbridge I received the following letter from him:—

FOUR ELMS, EDENBRIDGE, KENT,

*September 20th, 1881.*

DEAR BESSIE,—I have been telling Lady B. of a story I read when a boy; I am not sure it is not an Edgeworth. A spoilt child saw one of the brilliant red bottles in a chemist’s shop, and insisted on having it. In vain he was told that the colour was not in the glass, but the water. He had it,

and was disappointed. Alas, the organ, the piano, the music and singing are left with me, like the bottle; but the brilliancy—"the contralto"—is gone! My piano is worse than ever—I *must* change it. Lady B. is very well, but would go out in the fog at six in the morning, and has a little cough since; very silly and very selfish. She sends her love. It was very unwise of you to catch cold; you will not get rid of it at Newcastle, I should think. We will let you know our Xmas abode—when we know it ourselves.—Ever yours,

G. BRAMWELL.

The following letter should have been placed before the one just inserted, as it was written in 1879. It is very interesting in a way. I was in Newcastle from September 27th teaching singing, and often went from there to Scotland for concerts:—

FOUR ELMS, EDENBRIDGE, KENT,

*December 26th, 1879.*

MY DEAR BESSIE,—I am ashamed to write to you, and only do so because I should be more ashamed if I did not. We hoped you would come and see us, and we hoped Lady B. would be able to get to you, and what with our hopes and the moving from Eaton Square, you were forgotten, and so not written to. This is the honest truth, so let us hope we have shamed the Devil. Not that we had any-



thing to write about; except, indeed, that I am glad to say what you will be glad to hear—Lady B.'s cough has gone; she does not cough at all—not from any particular care she takes of herself, for she will go out early and late, frost and fog. But so it is—it has gone. Andrew Clark said she ought not to stop another winter in England. You would not say so if you saw her; she looks very well. Certainly she is not robust, and never will be. I am quite well. And how about yourself? Write and let us know. Scotland seems warmer than England. Lady B. sends her love, so do I. We shall not be in town till the middle of February, when we shall hope to see you.—Very truly yours,

G. BRAMWELL.

In 1860 Baron Bramwell often invited me to his house in Old Palace Yard, as it was then called. His study was a most quiet, delightful room at the back of the house, looking on Westminster Abbey, and with many trees in the paved "court," rather than garden; the effect at sunset was lovely, the Abbey being so picturesque. I often sang there with the Baron's daughter Jane, whose voice was soprano; Arthur Duke Coleridge, and William Millais (brother of Sir J. Everett Millais), both tenors; and the Baron sang the bass parts in quartets, etc., as well as solos, which we all sang.

Towards the end of 1881 Lord Justice Bramwell

retired from the Bench, and many articles were written in the papers speaking in the highest terms of the great reputation left by him, and a grand banquet was held in his honour. I wrote congratulating him on the capital and true way in which these notices were written, and he answered me with the following letter:—

FOUR ELMS, EDENBRIDGE, KENT,

*December 2, 1881.*

DEAR BESSIE,—I have had a very great honour done me, which, however, seems to have caused as many tears as smiles. We are both much pleased with your very kind note. Lady B. sends love. She asks, when I put a letter into her hand, “Am I to cry over it?” We are still here, and uncertain when we shall leave, for our courier is ill; that also makes it uncertain where we shall be at any time. But you must write to us—direct here. Lady B. is wonderfully well—not a touch of the cough.—Ever yours,

G. BRAMWELL.

The *Times*, July 13th, 1881, had a long article on the Assizes at Maidstone, commencing the 12th July, and wrote about the rumour of my friend's approaching resignation. He had then been “on the Bar” forty-two years, having been made a Baron of the Exchequer in 1856, and in 1875 a Lord Justice of Appeal, and the *Times* speaks most

highly of his "conducting the business with characteristic vigour and ability." The paper continues:—"Few Judges have been more liked by the Bar than Lord Justice Bramwell. Gifted with great natural vigour of mind and quickness of apprehension, he was yet remarkably patient in listening to their arguments, and showed still more remarkable candour in putting their arguments for them in the strongest and clearest way in which they could possibly be put, so that they could not hope to put them better (a very happy way of repressing undue prolixity); and that if he desired to show their fallacy he would do so in the Socratic way, by questions so shrewd and keen that no sophistry could evade them, and yet in a good-natured way that would even amuse; and thus a long argument would often be cut short, and its fallacy exposed in the clearest, shortest, and most pleasant and satisfactory way, and without annoyance to anybody. No wonder that the Bar liked a Judge who thus dealt with them—one who had a giant's strength and did not use it tyrannously or unfairly, but with candour and good humour, and racy frankness and thorough kindness of manner, which made every man feel that he had been able to make the best that could be made of his case, whatever it might be; and it was only very great stupidity or very great persistency in wrong which

could be proof against his mixture of shrewdness and good-humour and rouse his naturally quick temper into anger."

In 1882, the following year, his elevation to the Peerage by the title of Baron Bramwell of Hever, in the county of Kent, was universally looked on as a fitting recognition of his valuable public services, and he took great interest in going to the House of Lords when in town, which of course his title enabled him to do. His love of music continued as strong as ever, and when I spent a day or evening with him and Lady Bramwell, either in Hans Place, Cadogan Place, or stayed with them at Four Elms, Edenbridge, we used always to play duets together on the piano, alternated by songs, favourites of his, which I often sang to them both. In January 1883 I sang in the *Messiah* at Newcastle, while staying there three months to give singing lessons, and sent them a paper with a notice of the performance in it. In February I returned home, and had the following letter from Lord Bramwell:—

FOUR ELMS, EDENBRIDGE, KENT,

*February 9th, 1883.*

DEAR BESSIE,—We are not in town, but shall be the week after next, say Wednesday, the 21st, on or after which I need hardly say we shall be very glad to see you. We have not been abroad; we have

wintered here, and wonderful to say Lady B. has been free from cough and bronchial attacks, and also affections of the throat; not from any care on her part, for she has been out early and late—wind, cold, rain, and fog—in the most reckless manner. But she is stronger, so able to bear it. I have been very well till the last day or two, when I have been pestered with lumbago and rheumatism, but they are going, thanks to Vichy water and gin, in lieu of wine.

We received your Newcastle paper, and rejoiced at your success. Overwork is unpleasant, but better than underwork—at least *I* thought so. Lady B. sends her love. Come to us soon—34 Cadogan Place.—Ever yours,

BRAMWELL.

In September 1886, when I lost my good, generous friend Mrs. Williams, of 95 Queen's Crescent, Haverstock Hill, mother of my poor dear young friend Sadie, some of whose lovely poems I have re-printed in this book, I wrote to Lord Bramwell, telling him of her great kindness in leaving me residuary legatee to her estate. He wrote immediately back to me, and I reproduce the letter:—

FOUR ELMS, EDENBRIDGE, KENT,

*September 24th, 1886.*

DEAR BESSIE,—Lady Bramwell and I are sincerely rejoiced at your good fortune. I have often wondered whether you had saved enough to support yourself

when you could sing and teach no longer, and I suppose such a time will come. Now you are independent, and have enough to keep you very comfortably when you are unable or unwilling to work any longer. You will believe me when I say we are both very glad; you would not have told us if you had not thought we should be. We came back from France yesterday, and got your letter. We were away nearly six weeks. It has done Lady B. a deal of good. I think I am somewhat better, but oh that rheumatism! Your good news is worth many a twinge. How odd that on the same day we heard of the death of your old friend Hatton; he was what is called "a good old age." They should call it a "bad old age," with all its troubles. Lady B.'s love, and both our wishes for long life for you to enjoy your legacy.—Yours ever,

BRAMWELL.

In February 1888, Lord Bramwell left 34 Cadogan Place for No. 18 in the same street. Unfortunately his wife was not at all well, and Lord Bramwell wrote often to beg me to go and see her, as she could not bear the movement even of a good carriage, being in great pain. In the next month three doctors saw her, and their report was very unfavourable. All through the year she got worse, and I went constantly to see the poor thing. In 1889 she continued to get worse

through cancer, and on June 5th passed away without pain. After some time dear Lord Bramwell wrote to me, and we met occasionally and corresponded often.

In 1891 (July 18th) I started for America: not upon professional affairs, for I had ceased working altogether when my kind friend Mrs. Williams left me so much money, etc., but I was interested in a clever young man, Leonard Auty, introduced by me to Dr. Rea of Newcastle, who engaged him to sing at some concerts there in 1889. Afterwards Mr. Auty had an engagement offered him in New York, at a church there, and he became very much liked, having many engagements given him. Later he accepted a church engagement in Philadelphia, and his sister, Mrs. Brearley, went to live with him there. In the spring of 1891 I had a most pressing invitation from Leonard Auty, in answer to a letter from me explaining how ill I had been at the beginning of that year. He told me he was sure that a journey to Philadelphia, and staying there, would really do me great good, as it was a capital atmosphere and very healthy. So I did go to Philadelphia, and will, farther on, give a slight account of the charming places I visited. Lord Bramwell had been to America many years before, with his daughter Jane; and when I



wrote to him in June 1891, telling him of my intention to travel to Philadelphia, he sent me a nice letter urging me to go to many of the places I greatly enjoyed. Poor man! he terribly missed his wife, and often when we met each other he was very low-spirited.

In 1892 I went to see him very often and saw he was far from well, and in March he wrote to beg me to go and see him, as he thought of going to Four Elms, Edenbridge, when better. It was the last time I ever saw my dear old friend, for in April he went to his charming estate, Four Elms, hoping

he would improve there, and I heard on May 10th that he died the day before, at a quarter-past twelve. It was a great grief to me to have lost such a true friend. That I possessed his portrait was a real pleasure to me, and it cheers me to look at it often



LORD BRAMWELL.

Photo by Stereoscopic Co.



even now. All the newspapers spoke well of him, and regretted his death. Born in 1808 (June 12th), he was just upon eighty-four in 1892. I have the autograph of my dear friend in my "Shakespeare Birthday-Book," which also contains the "autos" of many other old friends. It interests one much to look through the book and see the handwriting of our best friends. I am glad to have his portrait inserted here in memory of his great friendship.

How I regretted, on December 2nd, 1903, to hear of poor Sir Frederick Bramwell's death on November 30th. Unfortunately, I had not seen him nor his wife for a number of years, and it grieved me that I should not have the great pleasure of seeing him even once again before losing him altogether. He always had such a bright, cheerful spirit, and I heard that even till the very last he maintained it. His elder brother, Lord Bramwell, who was ten years older than he, used to tell how the future engineer, when very young, decided on his vocation, usual school and classical education being wasted upon him. When he was first apprenticed to Mr. John Hague he had to help to break up one of Gurney's boilers, and afterwards said, with his amusing humour, that what he knew of the boiler was like that "of the converted cannibal, who, being asked of the

late bishop what he thought of him, said he knew he was a very nice man, for he had eaten a bit of him!"

Sir Frederick in his career soon joined the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. In 1874 he was chosen President of that Institute, and gave an address which attracted much attention, about the prodigal waste of coal in this "little island" by the working of more profitable seams, those that paid less being neglected, and this, he said, was not honest to posterity. He asked, too, if we were wisely alive to the value of our coal-mines and the possibility of our running short of fuel, and if we used as we ought "that primary source of power, the sun's heat," which year after year might be the means of growing on comparatively barren hillsides large amounts of quick-growing wood that could be used for domestic fires. I remember my pleasure on hearing he was knighted in 1881, also my delight on hearing in 1884 that he had been made President of the British Association at the Bath meeting. He chose for the subject of his inaugural address the title "Next to Nothing," and gave a very eloquent description of the engineer's work in the promotion of social progress. When the explosion happened on board the *Thunderer* he was employed as a technical assessor on the inquiry; and he also worked

for many years on the Ordnance Committee appointed in 1881.

Later in his life Sir Frederick was largely engaged as a consulting engineer, and also as an arbitrator. From 1885 to 1900 he was Hon. Secretary to the Royal Institution, and took much interest in its proceedings, being very seldom absent from the Friday evening lectures. Several times, when I was kindly lent a card of admission by Mrs. J. Wilson Swan, I had the great pleasure of seeing and talking to Sir Frederick, and occasionally when going to concerts at St. James's Hall I also met him there. This was a delight to me, as I had been so much out of London, singing constantly in both Scotland and Ireland, that I seldom saw very much of my dear old friends. Until I began singing and acting in operas I used frequently to have the happiness of meeting Sir Frederick and his wife at Lord Bramwell's house in Old Palace Yard; and much later on, after I had given up singing in operas, I often met them at Lord Bramwell's charming houses in Cadogan Place, the first being 34, and later on 18, where poor Lady Bramwell died in 1889. In April 1889 I wrote to Sir Frederick about the Goldsmiths' Company's votes, as a friend of mine wanted some help from the Company, and re-

ceived a nice letter, for I had not seen him for some years. I give this letter, showing his kindness in trying to help my friend :—

1a HYDE PARK GATE, S.W.,

*April 17th, 1889.*

MY DEAR MISS PALMER,—I have become old, and I daresay my memory is somewhat impaired for recent events, but it is still sound as regards matters more remote, and is indeed excellent as regards old friends, among whom I hope you will allow me to include yourself.

The Goldsmiths' Company's votes (in all cases) are in the exclusive gift of the Prime Warden of the year. I have sent on K. E. Gallott's card, with my recommendation, but the result will depend on the number and the nature of competing claims.—Most faithfully yours,

FREDERICK BRAMWELL.

I read in the newspaper some time ago that Sir Frederick's bust, sculptured by the late Mr. Onslow Ford, R.A., was placed, in honour of his services, in the ante-room of the lecture theatre of the Royal Institution. At the unveiling of the bust by the Duke of Northumberland, Sir Frederick gave a very amusing account of his having accepted the office in the face of his own feeling of unfitness. "But," he said, "I took the advice of an excellent

friend. To him I explained how unequal I was to such a position. 'Oh,' said my friend, 'that's nothing. Look at So-and-so: what a fool he is, and yet what a capital secretary he has made!' With this encouragement I took the office." His hearers were convulsed with laughter. Sir Frederick also referred in very touching terms of real regret to the death of Mr. Onslow Ford, which had been very recent. Of the later great undertakings in which he was interested and concerned, one was the South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company, and before electricity had gained its present great position, Sir Frederick declared the coming of the time when the steam locomotive would be a curiosity and a relic. He received many honours from scientific societies, and was elected a member of the Royal Society over thirty years ago. In 1889 he was made a baronet. In 1867 he married his cousin, Harriette Leonora Frith, and had one son and four daughters, two of whom survive him—one married to Sir Victor Horsley, F.R.S., and the other to Sir Henry Bliss, K.C.I.E. His son, unfortunately, died in childhood, so that his Baronetcy, like that of his brother, Lord Bramwell, is extinct.

## CHAPTER XII.

THIS will be a short chapter just to finish my "Recollections." As I write it I realise that the year is 1903 and near August, and I am almost seventy-two years old! I must tell all about my singing this year. It is a wonderful thing that my voice should remain good enough still to be heard in public. For many years I have always sung after the grand dinner of the Society for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts, and even last year I sang there (Trocadero Restaurant) with great success. On June 19th and on July 5th I sang after the dinner of the Printers' Pension Fund, and was immensely applauded after singing "When I was young," by H. F. Chorley, a very charming song. On the 12th I sang at the Town Hall, Chelsea, as the Vicar of Christ Church, close by, had asked me to do so at the dinner given by King Edward to the poor blind people. This year (1903), on February 8th, I went to the Rev. J. Pulleine Thompson's church (Christ Church mentioned just before this), and also asked Mr. H. Saint-George, a well-known violinist, to play a solo

at the Men's Service, where I sang "O rest in the Lord" and "He shall feed His flock." Mr. H. Saint-George told me after the service was over that my voice sounded full and fresh, and he enjoyed my singing very much. On February 15th I sang with Madame Wilson Osman the fine duet "Quis est homo," from the *Stabat Mater*, and also the solo from *St. Paul*, by Mendelssohn, "But the Lord is mindful." Easter Sunday, too, I sang at Christ Church, but my voice was not in very good order. Miss Marie Rodriquez played two solos on her violin very well. Again, on Trinity Sunday, June 7th, I was at Christ Church to sing at the Men's Service. I was suffering from a bad cold, but fortunately my voice got much better in a few days, for on June 11th I went to sing at a concert given in aid of the National Blind Relief Society, and the Duke of Westminster kindly allowed the Vicar of Christ Church, the Hon. Secretary, to give the concert at Grosvenor House, Park Lane. I was asked by Mr. De Carteret, who worked very well to start the concert, to write and ask some good singers to help the affair. I am very delighted to say that I wrote to Charles Santley, Vivian Bennetts, and Mrs. Helen Trust to sing, which they most kindly promised to do. I also begged Mr. Sigmund Beel to play solos on his



violin. All were most good, and sang and played splendidly. It was a great pleasure to me to receive such warm applause after I sang "Il tempo passato," and also after my second song, "When I was young." I was very delighted to find a capital notice in *The Stage*, also in the *Illustrated London News*. I now present what was said of me. *The Stage* said on June 11th:—"Miss Bessie Palmer, the distinguished singer of bygone days, concerning whose career particulars were given in these columns nearly two years ago, has promised to appear at a concert given at Grosvenor House this (Thursday) afternoon, in aid of the National Blind Relief Society. Miss Palmer hopes to have her book of musical recollections published in the course of the autumn. It is entitled *My Musical Recollections*.

Then on June 18th came this kind notice of the concert:—"It is not often that a septuagenarian vocalist is able to appear in association with so eminent an artist as Madame Albani. Yet this is what was done by Miss Bessie Palmer, the long-distinguished contralto, on Thursday afternoon, June 11th, at a concert given at Grosvenor House, in aid of the National Blind Relief Society, to which, as was stated, she is 'a good friend.' Miss Palmer will be seventy-two at the beginning of August, and she is proud to recall the fact that

she made her professional *début* as far back as December 20th, 1854, having Sims Reeves and his first wife and Lewis Thomas (all now dead) as her associates in a performance of the *Messiah* at St. Martin's Hall, which then filled the site afterwards occupied by the now vanished Queen's Theatre, Long Acre. Although nearly half a century has elapsed since the opening of Miss Palmer's career, the tones of her voice are still so rich and full as to make the present-day hearer easily understand her former successes in both opera and oratorio. Her phrasing and expression were beautiful in, for instance, 'Non ti ricordi più,' and the veteran vocalist was obviously gratified with the warmth of her reception."

Now follows the notice from the *Illustrated London News* of June 20th:—"On Thursday afternoon, June 11, at Grosvenor House, a very interesting charity concert, organised by Mr. Hubert de Carteret, was given in aid of the Blind Relief Society. The society boasts of being in the unique position of having practically no working expenses whatever. Every one connected with it gives their services voluntarily. An excellent programme was carried out, one of the most notable performances being that of Miss Bessie Palmer, who allowed her age to be announced. She is seventy-two years old, made

her *début* in 1854, and sang with Mr. Sims Reeves. She sang 'Il tempo passato' of Gordigiani, and possesses now a clear, sweet voice, with excellent low tones, absolutely unspoiled by age. Her intonation was faultless, and there were really very few indications of her great age or of any nervousness."

It is very refreshing to me to remember that when I first appeared in London I often had very good notices of my singing in the *Illustrated London News*, as well as in the many newspapers from which I have quoted in the earlier chapters of my book, though it was very many years after my father had ceased to print that well-known paper. I shall now introduce the notices sent to me of two papers, the *South American Journal* and *The Lady*, both giving notices of the concert after the annual dinner of the society named in it, on July 1st.

*South American Journal*:—"The annual dinner of the Society for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts, which took place on the 1st inst., was held at the Trocadero Restaurant, and was a great success, both from the social and musical points of view. General F. C. Keyser, C.B., was in the chair. Miss Bessie Palmer's finished and artistic rendering of 'Il tempo passato,' by Gordigiani, was enthusiastically applauded. She has a

beautiful and perfectly produced contralto voice. Later on she gave 'Gathering Heartsease' with much sympathy and charm."

Here follows the notice from *The Lady*:—"An admirable musical programme was gone through at the annual dinner of the Society for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts at the Trocadero Restaurant, Piccadilly, on the 1st inst. General F. C. Keyser was in the chair. Miss Bessie Palmer sang the charming "Il tempo passato," by Gordigiani, with exquisite grace, and her rich and perfectly trained contralto voice was heard to great advantage in her own composition, 'Gathering Heartsease.'"

I am indeed proud to be able to boast of all these kind notices now that I am so old, and so many years have passed since my first appearance. It makes my many years rest lightly to look back on the many successes I made, and even improves my spirits to feel how lately I have actually pleased people who have known of my many years' work, and find I still retain some of my greatly admired voice and singing. Lately I had great pleasure in singing "Il tempo passato" to Mrs. St. George Patten, the charming Secretary of the "Salon."

Some day I hope to give my concert for the Ladies' League of Kindness, and trust that my dear

friends Mr. and Mrs. J. Wilson Swan will let me have it held in their charming drawing-rooms. On July 4th, this year, I had a great pleasure in hearing and seeing Hilda and Dorothy Swan act most charmingly in two pieces, one short scene from a novel of Miss Austen's, very amusing, and *The Mouse Trap*, by W. D. Howells, most comic and amusing.

Being so close on my seventy-second birthday, August 9th, I really feel most happy to find all friends, professional and private, are still delighted with my voice and singing. It is rather wonderful to look back to 1834, when I was constantly singing on the table, being such a tiny child, to find that my voice remained pleasant all these many years, and I still hope to sing and bid adieu to all my many friends who have not heard me of late. Thus life keeps a real enjoyment for me; and though the prediction of John Robson when I was young, with regard to great attacks of illness, actually holds good, yet I live on, and the remembrances of the many past years give me the greatest comfort and pleasure.

## CHAPTER XIII.

MY trip to America started on Saturday, July 18th, 1891, and I left Park Village East for Euston at ten in the morning, arriving at Liverpool some time after two o'clock. My dear friends, Mrs. Watson and her daughter Janie, were at Euston to bid me "God-speed." It was a lovely day, and when at Liverpool I got to the dock by cab with all my luggage, including a deck-chair. I waited there till four o'clock for the tender to take me to the *Gallia*, the steam-vessel for New York, and was surprised to find it such a small steamer. My cabin or state-room, No. 9, was very tiny, but bright and clean, and I found the little bed inconvenient, it was so narrow—a fitting introduction to one's "last narrow couch."

*Sunday, 19th.* A very rough night in the Irish Channel, and I was very sick all day, so remained below. The stewardess was most kind—brought me tea and dry toast whenever I could eat anything, so I recommend all novices aboard to take nothing but "tea and toast" directly they begin feeling ill, and to keep to that simple regimen

until their natural appetite returns. At dinner on the Saturday night I sat next a very charming young American lady, just widowed, with a sad story. She came to England on a visit with her husband for a pleasure trip, and while at Brighton he died after a week's illness. Poor thing, I felt so much for her! The next day, the 20th, we saw several porpoises leaping into the air at a distance. I missed seeing the *Majestic*, which Mrs. Hall, the American lady, saw passing. A fine and smooth day.

21st. Mattress so hard in the night, back ached the whole time. Fortunately, was not sick, and stayed on deck all day, chatting with Mrs. Hall. We saw several porpoises, and a whale spouted close to the ship, startling us by the curious snorting noise it made. The sea-gulls still fly about us, as though they were loath to part company. A lovely day, and the moon is at the full. The sunset was very beautiful. Played a little on the saloon piano, but it is a very bad one. A gentleman asked me to play some of his songs with him, but I was talking with Mrs. Hall, and forgot till too late. Saw a ship in the far distance.

22nd. Slept better last night, but the bed is very hard. Went on deck—a most lovely morning. Saw another whale, but much farther away from the ship. In the morning the amateur

baritone asked me to play some songs for him. In the evening Major Ede, the baritone, played some of his own waltzes, pretty, but amateurish. We, Mrs. Hall, myself, Major Ede and his friend Dr. Alexander, chatted very pleasantly. Splendid weather, and feel wonderfully well.

23<sup>rd</sup>. Slept better. Glorious day, a smooth sea and brilliant sky. The only drawback is the soot and cinder falling all day from the smoke stacks, which is troublesome if it gets (as it will) down your neck and into your hair! We had some music before lunch; one of the most musical on board is Major Ede, going to Bermuda. I am afraid it is blowing up for foggy weather. About 7.30 P.M., we were startled by our fog-horn, and directly after heard an answering fog-horn close on our port. Looking out, we saw a large ship within half a mile of us! From that time the fog-horn sounded continuously—*i.e.*, every two minutes, and we “slowed down” till nearly 9 P.M.

24<sup>th</sup>. The fog-horn was going till four this morning, but I did not hear it after midnight, and slept well till 6 A.M. Have been on deck all day, though it is a little rougher. Wrote letters home after lunch, then played dear Chopin, but the piano is wretched! I forgot to write down yesterday that Mrs. Carroll, a passenger, sang a lot of songs—a lovely contralto voice, and sings fairly.



Major Ede and Dr. Alexander still continue nice conversations, and there are two young fellows, American, seated opposite to Mrs. Hall and myself at meals, who seem very interesting and intelligent young men — Messrs. O'Harra and Atkinson.

25th. A most lovely day, warm and sunny. We are now on the edge of the Gulf Stream — the ship goes splendidly. In the afternoon had some music with Major Ede and Dr. Alexander, till a heavy fog came on, and the fog-horn commenced its mournful bleatings. Dr. Alexander tells me that there is a patient in the steerage, an Irishman, who has been out of his mind since coming on board. He travelled to Liverpool to get some money owing to him, foolishly spent part in drink, and while stupid from its effects, was persuaded to buy a passage ticket for America — came on board in a drunken condition, and when coming round, learned what he had done and became quite frantic at the thought of his wife and family not knowing where he was, and of the utter impossibility of his returning to them at once. They had to put a strait-jacket on the poor fool. He is much better to-day, and bitterly rues his folly, saying: "It has been a lesson for me, and I'll niver touch a drop again!"

*Sunday, 26th.* The fog-horn sounded all the

night. Just after breakfast I heard one very faintly in the distance—it came nearer and nearer, ours sounding continually. In a very short time the *Blackheath* hove in sight on our port, and just seemed to clear our stern as she passed us in a slanting direction. We could see the men on board distinctly, and had not our second officer put the *Gallia* on a starboard tack very quickly we must have collided. It was most exciting. Some time after this they heaved the deep-sea lead, and found we were in 45 fathoms, with a white, sandy bottom. At 10.30 we had service; the doctor reading prayers instead of the captain, who has been ill (with influenza, they think) all the journey. The doctor asked me to play the two hymns; the first went all right, but the second was a bungle somehow. After lunch, about 2.30, the fog being still very thick, we heard a gun—it was from the cutter bringing out the pilot. For some time we watched and heard the curious wails from his tin trumpet approaching nearer and nearer; presently a small boat, with two rowers and the pilot, appeared through the dense fog. The pilot came on board, and the two men slowly rowed away into the thick white mist. It was very ghost-like and “uncanny” to see the little boat emerging suddenly from nowhere, and as suddenly disappearing again—like a small relation

of Vanderdecken! Some minutes after we saw just one mast-head and a flag flying, dimly seen through the all-enveloping fog, which still concealed the cutter from whence came the pilot and boat. We have heard another gun, from some other pilot cutter, I expect, going out to another steamer. I hope it will clear up to-night, for it is so depressing to hear the mournful tones of the fog-horn going constantly through the night.

27th. Got up at 6.30, packed my cabin-box, then on deck for first glimpse of New York Harbour—very fine. Breakfasted, then on deck again for a look of Staten Island and New Jersey City; the first most charmingly fresh and green, with the gigantic statue of “Liberty” erected at the nearest point, and domineering over the whole seascape with great majesty, though I think it would be improved by a higher pedestal, or if placed on higher ground. Just then we had to go below and “declare” to the Custom House officer if we had any dutiable goods. I “declared” four pairs of gentlemen’s gloves, whereat he shrugged his shoulders, which I took to mean that they would pass. By degrees we steamed into the harbour, which is very large, whence several of the highest buildings in New York can be seen—notably the *World*, *Sun*, and *Tribune* newspaper offices, and just the top of the City Hall tower. On to the

wharf Mr. H. O'Harra and I came, after bidding adieu to our fellow-passengers, especially to Mrs. Hall, Dr. Alexander, and Major Ede. Mr. H. O'Harra had in the kindest way offered to squire me to Philadelphia. I passed the Custom House "exam." quite easily. A jovial-looking official was told to examine my luggage, and he simply passed his hand down inside the two ends of the large trunk, looked into the bonnet-box, took no notice of my black bag and cabin-box, and scrawled the magic hieroglyphic which freed me of them all. Having checked my luggage to Philadelphia, Mr. O'Harra and I took the elevated (but not elevating to the mind) cars to the Desbrosses Street Ferry for New Jersey City, whence the Philadelphia line starts. He wired at once to Mr. Leonard Auty what train I should arrive by, and we started. The scenery of New Jersey is uninteresting, and it struck me as curious the way in which houses in various villages or towns we passed were dropped down promiscuous-like, each man setting his house's face just where he liked without reference to his neighbour, nor even to the possibilities of forthcoming streets. Nearly all the houses were of wood, and very plain, not to say ugly, in their shape and make. As we went on the country improved, and it began to look very like England, except the queer little wooden houses in towns and

villages, which told me at once it was not "mine own countrie." Philadelphia Station reached, we looked in vain for Mr. Auty or Mrs. Brearley, so Mr. O'Harra took a cab for us two, and left me and my luggage at 2,112 "Green," as they say here, dropping the "street." It is a pretty street, with trees growing nearly all the way along the foot-ways, and the houses are picturesque, with their red brick faces outlined often by white marble, and with white marble steps. The fashion now is to build houses of a dark-brown freestone, but I do not like them at all, they are so sombre. Mr. Auty's door was opened by a smiling "coloured girl," as they call the negresses here, whether young or old, who told me they had started directly the telegram came, only a few minutes since! She gave me some tea, which was very welcome after my long dusty railway journey. They soon returned, and I was glad to wash and refresh myself. Leonard Auty has grown fuller in face, but is not stouter in figure. His voice has strengthened, and he sings ballads charmingly. I wish he could take lessons of Sims Reeves, it would do him a world of good; he needs breadth and repose, and he does not manage his highest notes well—"rushes" at them.

*28th.* After breakfast we went for such a delightful drive through Fairmount Park. It is full of lovely scenery, is twenty-five miles long,

and contains hundreds of acres. The Schuylkill River runs through the park, and greatly adds to its beauty. The trees, particularly the tulip trees, are splendid. We drove beyond Wissahickon Creek, then back to dinner. In the afternoon I wrote lots of letters, and in the evening we had music.

*29th.* Last night a thunderstorm passed over the city; one tremendous peal rattled over the house, but soon passed away. It rained all day till five o'clock, when Mr. Auty and myself went to Wannamaker's (the Whiteley of Philadelphia), but as it takes half-an-hour by train to get there, we had only time to get what we wanted, as they close at six. It is an enormous place, modelled on the "Maison Louvre" in Paris. Three wet days went on, and Sunday, August 2nd, was fine; I walked in the park with Mrs. Brearley's son Harry, a very nice lad of seventeen. It was lovely. Wrote letters in the afternoon, and then sat in the garden till late. We settled we would go to Newport, Rhode Island, to-morrow.

*Aug. 3rd.* Got up at six, packed my box. We left at 12.30 by the Pa. and Reading Line (Blue Line), not the one I came by from New York. The country is very like England about the South and lower Midlands, except that there are no hedges; light wood fences instead. The towns

along the line have the queerest look of not belonging there, and as if they were only set down temporarily; one feels that next time you come that way they may be all gone. They are set down so oddly too, just as though each house had been dropped into the "lot," as they here call plots of ground for building. On reaching New York we walked to the Brooklyn Bridge, passing the old City Hall and a number of immense houses, all newspaper offices, some of which were ten and twelve storeys high. We got some lunch (chicken salad, very good) at Silber's, in Fulton Street. Having taken the rail over the bridge to Brooklyn, we walked back, and had a splendid view of this wonderful piece of engineering skill. I have never seen any more beautiful suspension bridge than this, and as we passed beneath it shortly after in the *Plymouth* for Newport it looked like a lace insertion suspended by fine threads over the wide river. The *Plymouth*, a Fall River steamer, has three decks, and stands about sixty feet out of the river. She is a splendid boat, something quite different to any boat I have seen before, and when the electric lamps are alight the saloons look very bright and handsome. Mrs. Brearley and I shared a state-room, and were awakened at 4 A.M. August 4th, by the steamer arriving at Newport.



Only finished dressing in time to get off the boat, as she left immediately for New York. After asking terms at the Ocean House, the hotel, we went on to Cliff House, very prettily situated with a charming view of the sea, which Ocean House lacks; but we did not like the bedrooms, so returned to Ocean House after wandering about in search of private lodgings. We could find none to let. Ocean House gave us nice rooms, and a first-rate breakfast. A band plays in a little orchestra outside the hall-door during breakfast, and in the corridor during the evening; but they did not play very well. One waiter is very charming; all are coloured "boys," but he looks like a West Indian creole, not nigger-featured at all. The food is very good, plentiful, and well cooked. Barrington Foote is staying here. I sent my card to him, and presently Mr. Chandler, the head clerk, brought him to me in the drawing-room, where I was touching, in doubt and aversion, a horribly out-of-tune piano. B. F. seemed very pleased to see me.

5th. Went for a lovely walk over the cliffs, passing the villas and houses built and occupied by the great millionaires, like Vanderbilt, etc. Some are of white marble, and surrounded by beautiful trees and most verdant lawns ornamented with a profusion of the brightest flowers; they look



like fairy palaces. Some are of red brick in the Queen Anne style, and some in the fashionable brown freestone; but all large, beautifully decorated, and surrounded by lovely flowers and trees. We dined at three as usual, and some time after I asked Mr. Auty to sing a song in the drawing-room. Mr. Chandler rushed in at once, and was charmed, I could see, by his singing.

*6th.* A most lovely day. We went for a long walk over to the Second Bay, as they call it—a glorious walk of about four miles. We came to a rift in the cliff called Purgatory—why, I know not, for it is not at all awful-looking. It will not compare with the fissures in the rocks up by Berwick for depth or grandeur. We walked till we were dead-beat, and were wondering how on earth we should get back, when we saw a farm waggon with a tilt over it. Mr. Auty asked the driver (and owner) if he would take us to the tram-car starting-place, and he told us if we could wait a short time he would. So after ten minutes' waiting his nephew, a "canny" lad of about seventeen, drove up. It was the most delightful relief to sit down in the waggon with the cool air blowing through it, and we found ourselves very lucky in getting it. Rested after dinner, and worked at my slippers. Finished the black wool in the first slipper. There is a most charming

woman here—Mrs. Van Densen, who lives in Kalamazoo, between Detroit and Chicago. She has made me promise, if I go to Chicago, that I will go and see her.

7th. Went for a sail, to see the yachts which take part in the match to-day. As we put off from the stairs a well-dressed man about sixty asked if he might come. Thinking he was the owner of the boat, "a catboat," Mr. Auty said yes. After starting he sat down by me, and wanted to shield me from the sun with his umbrella, saying, "Must keep your head cool, you know, or you'll be ill." I stared rather at this remark, and he went on, "Yes, I'm obliged to be *very* careful about *my* head. I was sick in the hospital over there (jerk-ing his shoulders) all through my head—sick in my head, you know, for two or three years. Oh yes, I was very bad, but I'm all right now. I shan't throw you overboard!" Mr. Auty answered quickly, "If you did it would not matter, for we can all swim." So the man maundered on with an interminable tale the whole time we were out—always about friends meeting and drinking champagne and port and brandy, etc.; also about washing up tea-cups for some lady-friends! I certainly thought there was not much need of *tea-cups* in the society *he* seemed to frequent. I am sure his lunacy (of which we had no doubt)

was caused by over-drinking. In speaking to me, to whom he seemed very friendly, his voice was very gentle, and I have no doubt that he was not a bad man at heart, but utterly ruined by that fearful drink. After dinner we talked with Mrs. Van Densen and her daughter-in-law, and I must say I greatly enjoyed conversing with the elder lady. She was extremely nice, and took so much interest in my movements, hoping that I might go on to Kalamazoo and visit her. She hoped, too, to come to England some year, so I asked her to be sure and call to see me if she did come to our country. Mrs. Van Densen had a great liking for my singing and playing on the piano, and she certainly took much enjoyment in hearing an Englishwoman. Really, we both were very much interested in each other, and I hoped I should see her in England some time after my return here. I bought in Newport two souvenir spoons and a silver pin.

8th. A very hot day, but very lovely. Walked a long distance to see the Spouting Rock, which was *not* "spouting," as it is only in very rough weather that it is so. We bid Mrs. Van Densen and her daughter-in-law good-bye after supper. The former begged me, if ever I went near Kalamazoo, to be sure to go and see her. I was quite sorry to say adieu, she was such a sweet, refined

woman. At 10 P.M. we started in the *Puritan* for New York, where we arrived at 5 A.M.

9th. We breakfasted on board very badly, and went on shore at 8 A.M. We took the elevated cars right away beyond Central Park to Harlem, and a very ugly, "one-eyed" place it is. As to the streets we passed over *en route*, I was much disappointed in them, they are so "mixed." A few fine houses are jumbled up with shabby, common ones, and so close to the elevated rail that it must be a misery to live in them. But these are not the best streets, for Mr. O'Harra told me the elevated cars did not pass through the best neighbourhood. Being Sunday, none but the common shops (like our East End ones) were open. After a long and tedious walk we rang the bell at the Rectory of Grace Church, and the servant, the family being absent, opened the church for us. It is a very nice Gothic church with fine stained-glass windows in it. Mr. Auty sang there for some years when he first came to America. We also called to see a friend of his, who was away in Jersey City, and then got lunch at 12.30 in a restaurant. After, we made our way, rather wearily (for it was very hot and stifling, though no sun was out), to the ferry, where we checked the two small bags, the other luggage having been checked right away from Newport to Philadelphia, and started home at two.

The check system seems to me admirable, the only drawback being the abominable way in which the porters throw, or "chuck," your baggage about. If they would only order the porters to use less violence in throwing the boxes about, the system would be perfect, as after checking it one has not the slightest occasion to trouble about it—the boxes would always turn up at the right house and right time. We got to 2,112 about five o'clock. Harry, not having heard from his mother, spent the day with friends, not expecting us till to-morrow, and there was absolutely nothing in the pantry but a small piece of stale bread, so we went to bed supperless. About ten he came in, dreadfully worried that we had come home in his absence. He had spent Saturday afternoon and night, with Sunday too, at a friend's, hence our enforced abstinence.

10<sup>th</sup>. Very hot day. I went out to order things for dinner, as Mr. A. said he was too ill to go out. Had letter from Reg., wishing me "Many happy returns." Also a very nice letter from Mrs. Hall. She called here on the 6<sup>th</sup>, and I am so sorry to have missed seeing her. Wrote to both. Intensely hot; felt very exhausted, partly, I think, from our lack of good meals yesterday.

11<sup>th</sup>. Intensely hot all night—could not sleep at all; felt very tired, and stayed in the day.

12<sup>th</sup>. Desperately hot. Felt so ill that returning to England at once was the only idea I could think of; much too exhausted to work it out, however. There being no servant (Ida was sent away when we started for Newport), we went to Green's Restaurant in Chestnut Street and lunched (dined) there. About 1.30 a downpour of rain and thunderstorm cleared the air a little. Went to Registry Office for Servants; it is most uncomfortable being without one.

13<sup>th</sup>. Went to Strawbridge's for some sateen to make a skirt. It was cooler, so felt better.

14<sup>th</sup>. Letters from Janie, Rosalie, Alfred Emslie, her husband, the clever painter, and Mrs. Watson, with birthday wishes; also one from Miss Laroche. Sent cheques to the Watsons for the case they wrote about, and to L. P. Lunched in town with Mr. Auty, Mrs. Brearley preferring to stay at home, feeling not at all well. Went to restaurant, top of Draxel's, the Bank; very good view of Philadelphia. No letter from Lizzie Goddin yet; I'm anxious about it.

15<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Auty was charmed with our trying over of "The Old and the Young Marie," by that clever Cowen.

16<sup>th</sup>. Up very late, as Mrs. B. was so unwell during the night. Went for short walk in the park. Sat under the trees and gave Harry B. a French

lesson. I forgot to say that I had begun giving him lessons every evening he was disengaged, and found him very steady and persevering. Mr. E. T. Chipman arrived in the afternoon, and the nice young man, Mr. O'Harra, came in on the evening before.

*17th.* Heard at last from Lizzie Goddin, M. Pallister, Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Mather, and Miss Salmon.

*18th.* Very wet and stuffy, felt so weak and tired. Wrote to Louie Rounthwaite and Mrs. Galbraith.

*19th.* Went down town. Dined at Bullet Buildings (Boldt's), a restaurant at the top of offices, etc., about ten storeys high, and with the kitchen over the restaurant. All nicely cooked and appetising. Afterwards, Mrs. B. and I walked through Earle's Picture Gallery, and Caldwell's. Saw some very charming water-colours at the first named, and a large picture of "Abraham Lincoln's Youth"; rather a good picture but too large a canvas, so the interest was lost. Very handsome china at the last named.

*20th.* Dr. Grayson called; about thirty-two or thirty-three, I think; a very nice man, with good manners and charmingly soft-speaking voice—it is like a refined Englishman's. He is going away for his health, which is not good.

*21st.* Another dreadfully oppressive day. Went

to Raymond and Whitcombe's to inquire about tour to Niagara, etc. In the afternoon Mrs. Van Gunton called, then we took train to see the Memorial Hall. Passed the Girard College and the Eastern State Penitentiary.

*22nd.* In the afternoon went over the Girard College. It is a most noble institution for the education of orphans, founded by a Frenchman, Stephen Girard by name, who in 1776 was caught by a dense fog off Delaware Bay. He was told by the pilot that as war was declared between Great Britain and the Colonies he had better not go on to New York, but land his cargo here, in Philadelphia, as there were British ships coasting about the northern shore. He did so, eventually became a citizen of Philadelphia, and endowed this splendid gift of the college with all his wealth, at his death in December 1831, being eighty-one years old. He must have been a most generous and prudent man, and his life is well worth reading. The buildings are very fine and well fitted for their purposes. There is provision for over 1500 pupils. After receiving a first-rate education, the boys, at a certain age, are placed out in situations, if they behave well and prove themselves steady and industrious. Harry Brearley knew a lad in his bank (the North American Bank), in Chestnut Street, who was educated here, and he thought



him a well-educated and well-mannered young fellow. The main building, the first erected, is of pure white marble, Grecian in style, containing a statue of Girard, and a sarcophagus with his remains, which were placed there on the completion of the college, 1848. There are also class-rooms, and a museum containing relics of the old man—his “gig,” so well known in the streets of Philadelphia during his busy life, besides a secretaire and musical clock, given to him by Jerome Bonaparte. There are 1574 boys now there. A very nice, intelligent man, the Vice-President, Mr. Gregory, kindly took us into the chapel, and was much interested on learning that we were English, and also singers. He told us that his wife, an Englishwoman, now dead, had possessed a most lovely pure soprano voice, and seemed quite interested in “matters musical.” We also saw the dining-halls, splendidly ventilated large rooms, very comfortable and well arranged. It was a most interesting sight. Mr. Gregory spoke of Müller’s School in Bristol, which he said had done better in some respects than this, though to others this was preferable. He said it was wonderful what Müller’s undertaking had accomplished, seeing that it had not been richly endowed as this place had.

23rd. Very hot. My arm, which was bitten

either by a mosquito or a gnat, is so painfully swollen and burning that I can only wear my loose dressing-jacket.

24<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Brearley's "musicale," four to seven. Mr. and Mrs. Berens (he the musical critic on one of the Philadelphian papers), Mr. and Mrs. Van Gunton, Mr. and Mrs. Chambers, Mrs. Parker, Armitage, Brierley, Harry's fellow-clerk, and Harry himself, completed the party. I was very much out of voice, so was Mr. Auty, but we sang "The Sailor Sighs" with effect. I liked Mr. and Mrs. Chambers, also Mr. and Mrs. Van Gunton, very much; they all have a "spice" of Quakerism about them that is very pleasant. Mrs. Parker is very kindly natured, and Mr. Berens is quite "up" in musical matters, and very conversational. His wife seems clever, too, in teaching.

25<sup>th</sup>. Received the letter of credit from L. and W. Bank on Drexel's. Very hot.

26<sup>th</sup>. Hotter still. Poured in the afternoon, and we did not get to Mr. and Mrs. Chambers's till seven, though invited for six; but Mrs. B. is, I find, never too punctual. The Chambers are very kind-hearted people, and their son seems clever, but was suffering from headache. Mr. Chambers has a wonderful collection of bank-notes for all sorts of sums, bonds of the old *régime*, and an immense quantity of the paper money of America from

its first institution, including the greenbacks issued by the tradespeople during the Civil War, 1862 to 1865, as change for dollar bills. It is a marvellous collection, and must be very valuable as well as interesting.

27th. Looked very stormy still, and I feared our excursion to the Van Guntons', at Somerton, seventeen miles out; but it cleared up beautifully, and we got there by rail to dinner at 3.30. It is a charming house and grounds, essentially built for the summer, though they live there the winter through, and make it very warm by means of double windows, etc. Mr. V. G. took us for a lovely drive, about twelve miles, through such bright, well-cultivated, and pretty scenery, putting me in mind of Middlesex and Surrey, especially in the soft, rounded outlines and handsome clusters of trees. The sky was simply wonderful, stormy and bright by turns, with some of the most lovely cloud effects I ever saw. The Van Guntons are very simple in habits, but well bred and nice, and Mr. V. G. is a man of culture and reading. Mrs. Williams, who was there with her husband, is a good, refined, educated woman; I thought she was English, her speech being so free from the least "twang." It was a sweet, enjoyable evening.

28th. Very hot in the morning, but cooled down "some," and at night was absolutely cold. We

went to the Grand American Opera, by Mrs. Berens's invitation, and saw *La Gioconda*. I am not struck with the music, which is poor modern Italian; trivial and commonplace melodies and noisy orchestration, and exaggerated in accent. The singers all overdo it. Clara Poole, the contralto-named, has a good low mezzo-soprano voice; but she must not force the upper notes. She ought to have played the Cieca part, which *is* contralto, and was not well sung at all. Miss Poole will soon lose her middle and lower notes if she ventures any more such duets as that between her and *La Gioconda*—rapturously applauded by the audience. Guille, the French tenor, who sung his part in Italian, as did Del Puente, the others singing in English (!), has a throaty production of voice, with some very sweet notes, but he too is everlastingly singing out B's, Bb's, and C's, just for the sake of the gods, who yell with delight the more every one shouts. The chorus and band are much better than such a company would have in England; the individual artists are not as good. Del Puente "tremolos" and shouts so much it is painful to listen to him. Kronold, the German soprano, has dramatic feeling, but she too shouts and shrieks her top-notes. The theatre is pretty and well-lighted, though I do not like the arrangement of the lights (electric) in the ceiling; they attract the

eye too much. Heard again from Mrs. Hall. She regrets so much that her mother and she are not at home; hopes they may return from Arizona in time to invite me to Hartford. They are now staying with her brother at some silver-mines in Tombstone, Arizona.

30th. Very wet and dull. Did not venture out.

31st. A letter from Lizzie Goddin.

September 1st. Early in the evening went by steamboat up the Schuylkill to Wissahickon Creek. Charming pretty scenery, reminding me somewhat of Shiplake and Henley, only this river is much broader, and scarcely so "refined."

2nd. We were to have gone to Tioga, to visit some friends of Mrs. Brearley, but were deferred. I suggested our going to see *Pygmalion and Galatea* at the Chestnut Street Opera House *matinée*. Miss Minnie Gale was fairly good as Galatea; she looked lovely, and was really pathetic in her farewell to Pygmalion. Creston Clarke played that part well, but the others were rather commonplace, except Cynisca, which was well played by a Miss Keith Johnson. None of them quite understood the delicate satire, mixed with pathos, that runs through Gilbert's delightful little play.

8th. Spent the evening at the Parkers'; very kind, nice people, with a bright, engaging daughter.

Mr. P. very intelligent. Such a pile of letters arrived for me!

9th. Started at 4.30 P.M. for Mauch Chunk, got there 7.30 P.M. The route through Lehigh Valley was very lovely, peaceful, and bright, the sun setting through a veil of trees, reflected in the river which we coasted a greater part of the way; a bright beginning of the tour. Supped at the Mansion House; had such odd rooms—a large semi-sitting, semi-dressing room, with a tiny little place off it, in which stood my bed and wash-stand, with one chair, and lit by a window on the corridor. Miss Anderson, a lady from Maryland, is next to my room, and I like her. It was bitterly cold, and I was glad to get to bed.

10th. Up at 7 A.M.; good breakfast, then went out; bought souvenir spoons. Started 9.30. A most lovely day. The scenery of the Lehigh and Wyoming Valleys is most beautiful. At one part of our journey we looked down over a vast track of land, valleys, cities, and towns, right away to Wilkesbarre (pronounced "barry") and Scranton, where we were to dine. It was a splendid view. I was told afterwards we crossed the Alleghany Mountains. We made a complete circle, gradually descending till we came to Scranton, where we had a capital dinner, prepared for us at the station, going on in half-an-hour. Arrived

at Watkins's Glen at seven, after a very hilly drive in the 'bus, having to take four horses for the last ascent up to the hotel, which is close to the Glen, and called "Glen Mountain Hotel"; had to cross a little covered bridge over the Glen to all meals. Very good supper, then to bed, after walking about the delightful grounds.

11th. Splendid day. After breakfast started in a body for the Lower Glen—such a beautiful place!—a deep rift in the rocks, through which waterfalls tumble down over jagged bits of curious slaty-looking rocks, with lovely foliage and ferns growing luxuriantly everywhere. After scrambling (for *walking* was not the term there) through we came to an opening out into the road, and took a car to Havana Glen, about three miles away; most lovely, but not so grand or wild as Watkins's Glen. The name Watkins comes from its original owner, they all tell me—an Englishman who bought large tracks of land round the head of Lake Seneca, by which the town is placed, many years ago. After dinner we walked through the Upper Glen, even more beautiful than the other much more rugged part, the rocks taking extraordinary forms; one especially, the Pillar of Beauty, is very fine. Pluto's Fall is very lovely also, but it is a place to be seen, not described, for no words can possibly do justice to its many

beauties. We had engaged a car (this was *extra*) to meet us at the outlet of the Glen, many miles away, so that we drove through quite a different part, and saw the vineyards, which are all over this part of the country, passing often by the side of Lake Seneca, nearly forty miles long, but narrow in proportion—only about two miles wide in parts. In the evening I was pressed to sing, and they encored me immensely. A young Hungarian violinist played remarkably well, though his instrument was a very poor one. His name was Lichtenstein.

12<sup>th</sup>. Up at a quarter to five; breakfast at 5.30; started in open cars for the station at 6.15. A fine day again. We followed the enjoyable coast of Lake Seneca for some miles, but left it at Geneva. The Glen proved a great success. We constitute a friendly little party (thirty-one in number), and all the gentlemen are kind and helpful, especially Messrs. Bancroft and Locke: they helped us so well in all the bad places in the glens, some parts being really dangerous, in spite of the little chains and balusters put up for support over the very slippery steps and gaps one has to cross. The rills from numberless springs running down the rocks make it awkward and even difficult to walk unaided in some parts; but the extreme beauty of the Glen amply repays one for



any amount of trouble. Mr. Bancroft, I find, speaks and reads French very well. He is the best educated man of our party, and very intelligent. At 1.20 we arrived at Niagara, getting just a glimpse of the "crowning glory of the rocks" by the way. At 2.30 we drove with Mr. and Mrs. Hill of Salem to see this sight of sights. No words of mine can portray the mingled grandeur and beauty of Niagara; no pictures, however fine, could give the awe-inspiring sound of its roar. We first walked to Prospect Point, close by the American Fall, which drops down steeply as if over a table, jutting out sometimes, but generally falling in a bubbling, frothy white mass of water, all its one hundred and sixty feet deep down over the broken rocks below, with tremendous force and continuous roar. Then we walked to the Three Sisters Islands, situated at one end of Goat Island, and above the Horseshoe Falls. Returning to the carriage over the little bridges, we saw the American Rapids, a series of constantly-ruffled waves above the American Falls, caused, I suppose, by hidden rocks, over which they make their headlong way towards the mighty one thousand-feet wide Fall. Drove over the Suspension Bridge to the Canada side, through Victoria Park to the Table Rock, where the full beauty of the unrivalled Horseshoe Fall held me speech-bound.

Fully three thousand feet wide of water falling in one majestic rolling wave from a height of one hundred and sixty-five feet, pouring over at the side nearest Canada in a curve, so that the upper part of the water, instead of frothing white all the way down, is of the loveliest pale tint of green, that exquisite green one sees sometimes over a fading sunset which has been exceptionally fiery and gorgeous. It is impossible to describe the wonderful beauty of it all. After feasting our eyes here we unwillingly left it for the Whirlpool Rapids. We descended by an inclined railway, and anything like the awful and savage beauty of the Whirlpool Rapids it is difficult to imagine. The river Niagara narrows up here to less than one thousand feet, receiving between the high rocky walls all the immense amount of water pouring down from the two cataracts, and the water dashes through the narrowed outlet with such force that the waves are heaped up, one on the other, thirty feet higher in the centre than at the sides. The water seems to writhe and foam with rage at the obstructions in its way, and holds the onlooker as though he were witnessing combatants, each striving for the victory which never comes. The struggle goes on unceasingly. We sat there forty minutes, and thought it only ten. This is where Captain Webb was drowned in his foolhardy

attempt to swim the Rapids. We drove back and rested till late dinner. In the evening a sudden storm came on, and it rained "some."

13<sup>th</sup>. After breakfast wrote lots of letters. At 11 A.M. started for the Inclined Plane Railway, taking us down to the *Maid of the Mist*, a small steam launch. We all put on tarpaulin cloaks and ditto helmets, and a queer set we looked when thus dressed! We passed very closely under the American and Horseshoe Falls, getting thoroughly drenched by the spray. From this small boat we gained a much clearer and closer view of the Falls, and being so near, could appreciate their height much more accurately. It is only when below the Falls that one feels *how* high they are; their width is so great, that from any other position it dwarfs their height. Coming back, Miss Anderson and I landed on the Canada side, and walked up the steep hill to Table Rock for another good look at the two glorious Falls. While sitting there, she told me that during the Civil War from 1862 to 1865 the Southerners suffered terribly from want of food, especially at those towns like Harper's Ferry, etc., where both armies passed through. Her mother's brother, named Dall, was of course serving with the rest of the Southern gentlemen, and had suffered as acutely as others of the army in that particular.

One day he was sitting on the fence when General Grant passed. Asking Mr. Dall some questions, which he answered brightly and cheerfully, the General looked at him steadily and exclaimed, "Well, I guess you're the liveliest skeleton I ever saw!" Miss Anderson is Scotch by descent, on both father's and mother's side, the latter being a Buchanan. She is most amusing—talks incessantly, but in American tone. She and I are always together, being the two solitary ladies of the party; we are often "told off" to adjoining rooms, and we chum together admirably, as I would always rather listen than talk. We stayed at the International Hotel—good rooms, good food, but rather slow service. In the afternoon I bought photographs and souvenirs of the place; then wrote, and packed my "satchel," as they called portmanteaux. We had just a glimpse, very lovely, of the Falls by moonlight, and then to bed.

14<sup>th</sup>. Left at 7.30 A.M. for Alexandria Bay. We are really going to Quebec, after all. So many of the members wished to go that the conductor, Mr. Harding, very kindly tried to arrange it. We only stay to-night at Alexandria Bay, leaving that place to-morrow at 7 A.M. for Montreal, arriving there 7 at night, sleeping there, and spending Wednesday by driving about, etc.

We are to leave for Quebec on Wednesday night, by steamer, returning to Montreal on Thursday night same way, arriving there at 5 on Friday morning. This is delightful, for I wanted so much to see the memorable old city. Our journey to-day met with the first check. After going very slowly and stopping several times, at Ogden our train came to a full stop! One of the "arms" of the engine was broken, so we had to wait a long time till another engine was attached, and we started again. It was a tedious journey, hot and stuffy, as we dared not open the windows on account of the smoke and dust; but every one bore the delay most good-temperedly, and it did not seem so long and slow as it really was. We are a very merry party. Mr. Hill, ex-Mayor of Salem, is the merriest of all, as he is the stoutest. His wife is a charming woman. Mr. Crane has photographed us all in a group seated on a shelving circle of rock in Watkin Glen. If it proves good he will send me a copy. We have two charmingly pretty girls in the party. Miss Ruby Wakefield and Miss Delia Gillis are both about fifteen years old; but the latter looks more than eighteen, and is thoroughly "grown up" in all her ways, while the former is very natural and girlish in her ways. Miss H. Moseley and her aunt, Miss Parry, from Boston, are extremely nice. Mrs. Hayes is very

good-looking. Talking of good-looking people, there was a very handsome couple at our table yesterday. He had been in business in Holborn ten years ago, he told me; they were both English. At dinner we sat next a Canadian gentleman and his sister. Miss Anderson tackled him at once, to my great amusement, telling him who and what she was, etc., which evidently tickled his fancy; she then introduced me as an Englishwoman travelling in America, and in answer to my questions he said that Canada collectively had no wish to separate from England—very few wished to be annexed to the United States. But to return to our journey to Alexandria Bay. Instead of arriving at Clayton, where we took the steamer to Alexandria Bay (Crosman's Hotel), at 6.30, it was nearly 9 P.M. We saw the Thousand Islands (or part of them rather) by moonlight, and it was perfectly fairy-like! All the houses built on those charming little isles were hung with coloured lamps, and it was very lovely with the bright moonlight shining on the grand St. Lawrence and casting clear-cut black shadows here and there, only partly dispelled by the soft light of the many coloured lamps. We stayed at Crosman's Hotel, as The Thousand Islands Hotel was closed for the season. The rooms were furnished much more in accordance with English taste, having

wardrobes (the first I have seen in America) in each bedroom. To bed at 11,

15<sup>th</sup>. Breakfast at 6.30. Started at 7 by steamer for Montreal, down the St. Lawrence River, passing through the Thousand Islands by daylight—very lovely they looked, scattered about this splendid river, full of beauty and peace. The Rapids are not so exciting as I expected, though it looks rather dangerous as the vessel lurches to the right or left when she goes over them. It is very cold, and I am afraid I have caught a bad one; it looks like rain too, though we may steer through it. The river is magnificent, very broad and smooth until we near the Rapids. The Lachine Rapids are the best or worst according to taste. I must look out for them. We have just passed the Adirondacks Mountains in the distance. It is most amusing to watch and to listen to the various groups on the boat. Bostonians attest the supreme perfections of their city, while Washingtonians tell you gravely that Boston *thinks* itself the "hub" of the universe, but it is so poor compared to Washington! Philadelphia prides itself on its scientific side, and is generally sneered at by the rest. We have passed the Lachine Rapids, and they certainly are the most "thrilling" of all. The boat plunges and rolls tremendously. I was standing on a chair and had to hold on very

tightly to my next neighbour, or I should have pitched over. It is a fine sight, and I am glad I have seen it. Going to the Windsor Hotel, Montreal, from the boat, one of the omnibus (or "car" as they call them) horses got under the shaft somehow, and delayed us for some time; one horse in the other car did go down. The streets from the landing-places are very steep and badly paved—in fact, bad paving is one of the strongest-marked characteristics of America, and I am ashamed that Montreal, being a British possession, does not set a better example in this particular to its neighbours. The hotel is very fine, the best we have had yet, and they have all been very good. The dining-hall is very like the large hall at the Holborn Viaduct Hotel, used for Companies' dinners, in London. There are white waiters irreproachable in their get-up, and actually salt-spoons on the dinner-tables—the very first I have seen since I left England!

16<sup>th</sup>. Started at 9 A.M. in carriages, with a very intelligent driver. Saw the Jesuits' College, Notre Dame, which is in very bad taste of painting of the columns, artificial flowers, and bad paintings. Notre Dame de Lourdes, a smaller church but in much better taste, has an effective statue of the Virgin Mary, with the light skilfully thrown on it from above. It is less coloured in



decoration, too, than Notre Dame, and has no galleries, which quite spoil the larger church. We then drove up Mount Royal, a fine park on a very high hill, covered with splendid trees, and laid out in some parts with lovely flower-beds. The ascent is slow, as the path winds up the mountain; but the view from the top is magnificent. We had a very intelligent driver, with a face exactly like the earlier portraits of the Duke of Wellington. After returning to the hotel we went to the Grey Nunnery: first to the chapel, where a nun read the service, the responses being chanted by the other nuns; then we went through the buildings—very roomy, very neat and clean, somewhat on the same lines as “Nazareth,” the Little Sisters of the Poor’s place at Hammersmith in London. There were some sweet, gentle women in the infirmary (very pleased to see an outsider) who had lain there for years, and would never be turned out. The girls’ and boys’ schools were next visited, each school singing and dancing for us. One of the boys had a very sweet little voice, and sang a long song, repeated in chorus, and in French. The girls’ voices were badly produced—the chest notes forced up, so that the tone of the middle voice was coarse and ugly. A great part of the nuns’ home was very interesting, but one room containing cripples and imbeciles was the most painful thing possible.

After dinner we went shopping, and Miss A. and I went to a bazaar held in the unfinished Church of St. Pierre, modelled on that of St. Peter at Rome, but half its size. We bought a few little souvenirs; the stalls were very poorly furnished. At five o'clock we all started for Quebec, which we shall reach to-morrow. On board the boat they asked me for "just one song." I was very hoarse, and felt my attack of cold very oppressive, but contrived to get through "Douglas Gordon," which they seemed to like immensely. I finished up by playing "Yankee Doodle" and "God save the Queen." We had a charming supper on board the Richelieu and Ontario steamer.

17<sup>th</sup>. Slept, or rather "waked," on board (so noisy), and arrived at Quebec at six. Breakfasted at St. Louis Hotel—very old-fashioned, but large and quite nice. Then we started for a drive up to the grey old Citadel. It was indeed interesting to see the interior of the Citadel, and a soldier pointed out to us all the memorable points—where Montcalm was struck down, and where Wolfe fell. The old place looks so antique, and is so silent, one can hardly fancy it crowded with soldiers, guns, cannon balls, etc. I suppose with "the latest improvements in Armstrong guns," etc., the old place would stand but little chance; still, I hope it will never be attempted. The view from

the King's Bastion is something to remember, a glorious panorama of broad river, glistening in the bright sunshine, soft and lovely hills all the way to the horizon, and the old-fashioned, quaint, foreign-looking town at our feet. We also drove about four miles out to see the Montmorenci Fall—very beautiful; had we seen it before we saw Niagara, we should have thought much more of it. It is 100 feet higher than Niagara, but a much smaller body of water falls over. They say it can be seen better from the railway passing on the opposite side at its foot. Back to St. Louis to lunch, then out shopping, buying such a pretty souvenir spoon and two nice hem-stitched handkerchiefs. At five we went on board the *Quebec*, my cold being very bad.

18th. Cold better. Arrived back in Montreal. No letters for me. We went on to the railway for Newport, Vermont, at 9 A.M. No letters at Memphremagog Hotel (Newport) for me; I cannot understand why no letters arrive. Several of the party went off in a steamer on Lake Memphremagog, but I felt too tired, and Mr. and Mrs. Hayes, Dr. and Mrs. Moore also stayed in. They had hardly set off when a terrific thunderstorm came on. One crash overhead almost threw me on my bed; it struck the house next to the hotel, we heard afterwards. I was very glad to see them

return about 6.45; they had enjoyed it very much. The scenery on the lake was lovely, and the rain, though heavy, did not obstruct the view. Cold and cough better. Dr. Moore most kindly prescribed and gave me bryonia, which has greatly helped me.

19th. After breakfast we were photographed in a group before leaving Newport. Our party begins to decrease. Yesterday Mr. and Mrs. Wood left us, and at St. Johnsbury to-day Mr. Johnson departed. Dined at Pemegawasset Station before one o'clock. The scenery is lovely—a beautiful lake, the Winnepesaukee, runs for miles, surrounded by thickly-wooded banks, and the White Mountain Range in the distance. Little islands dot the lake, and the “fall” tints on the trees, making up a picture one can never forget. Most of the visitors leave at Boston for their homes, but Mr. and Mrs. Hayes, Miss Anderson, and myself will be the last “remnant” of the “Raymond Gang” (Mr. Locke’s nickname for the party) staying at the United States Hotel there. When Mr. Johnson left at St. Johnsbury he came to say good-bye, and said he could not tell me how highly he appreciated the pleasure of my conversation and presence. Was it not a pretty speech? As we got nearer Boston all said adieu so kindly. Miss Helen G. Moseley, a very bright, intellectual girl, begged me to write

to her, and her aunt, Miss Parry, a very nice woman, also begged me not to forget her.

20th. Had a good night's rest, except that mosquitoes or gnats had bitten me horribly on the hands. Miss Anderson and I walked a little way on the Common, which is really pretty. We saw the State House, which is very old-world looking, and somehow puts me in mind of the pump-room at Bath. The streets in Boston are very different to the other towns, being very irregular, and more like dear old London's city streets than anything I have seen here, almost like "home." Miss Anderson is gone to see some cousins, so I am alone, as Mr. and Mrs. Hayes are also out, but it is really quite refreshing to be quiet for a time.

21st. Up at seven, breakfast at eight. Started at 9 A.M. for a drive. Some of the banks, as usual, are very fine stone or marble buildings. We drove to Bunker's Hill, where we got a memorable "licking"; then on to Cambridge and Harvard College, a splendid series of buildings, some of the old ones very interesting in their quaint simplicity, which contrasts well with the elaborate modern houses. The buildings are all surrounded by trees and sward, kept beautifully green and smooth, with some small lakes or ponds scattered about. On our road home we passed H. W. Longfellow's house, and the old, old tree under which General

Washington took command of the American Army, July 3rd, 1775. We drove through a most lovely road called Commonwealth Street, where the wealthy people live—very open, for few of the grounds belonging to the houses are fenced in in any way, simply edged round by a white marble low bordering, which gives such an amply free look to all the places. The houses are of the newest style, and very well designed. Beacon Street is fine, full of beautiful trees and houses, much like the Boulevards of Brussels. We left a card at Dr. Moore's house. Among my letters was one from my dear friend in Newcastle, Mrs. Mawson, to introduce me to the Lloyd Garrisons. I had only a short time, so went at once to Mr. Frank G. Garrison's office at Houghton & Mifflin's, the publishers of Boston. I told him all the news about the Mawsons. He was so sorry I must leave in the afternoon. After lunch Miss A. and I shopped, then started for the Fall River boat. When I returned from Quebec to Montreal I bought a novel, French, by Henri Conscience, called *L'Argent et la Noblesse*, and while at the United States Hotel, Boston, I left it in the lift. When I next went down the coloured boy gave it to me, saying, "That's a real charming story," so I lent it to him, and he nearly finished it, saying, "I shall get it some day and finish it." He had

learned French at school, he said. I must say the coloured servants have very nice ways with them, and seem always so happy to do anything for you. We found a large Raymond's Touring Party just starting on the boat. At New York we left them, Miss A. and I taking the elevated cars to Fourteenth Street. We walked through Union Square, a very fine, open place, but the buildings all so high that they make the places seem hard to breathe in. We looked in at Tiffany's, *the* jeweller of New York, but did not like his spoons, so went to Whitting, Webb, & Co.'s, where I got a very pretty one. We had some delicious cream soda, then walked up Broadway, where I bought a quantity of scent (orris root) for Miss Anderson. We called on her friends in Twenty-sixth Street, then took the car back to Gortland Street Ferry, on our way looking into Trinity Church, which is very fine, and with a splendid stained glass window. Wall Street, which is famous for the rapidity with which fortunes have changed hands within its houses, is just opposite to the entrance of Trinity Church. The general impression I get of New York city is dress, dirt, dust, and desperate driving for money; every one is in a hurry, and it is about the last place I should care to stay in. It is a fine city of enormous buildings—thirteen to fourteen storeys high many of them. But the noise and



discomfort of those elevated railways are much too horrible for any quiet person. I arrived in Philadelphia about 6.30.

23<sup>rd</sup>. Rested till the afternoon, then went to Wayne to dine with Mr. and Mrs. F. Grayson. His mother was not there, nor the doctor, his brother. Captain Julius, Mrs. F. Grayson's father, is a fine old man, aged eighty: a regular "old salt," full of anecdote. We spent a most pleasant evening, and were very much amused at the "advanced" manners of their only child, a boy about ten.

25<sup>th</sup>. Went to Waunamaker's, bought a pretty lamp for Mrs. Brearley. Then to Bailey, Banks & Biddle's, where I left Harry's watch, which I bought in Boston, to be engraved with his initials; also, a very elegant inkstand for Mr. Auty. They had a few friends that evening, but several disappointed them.

26<sup>th</sup>. Settled to leave for Southampton in the *Columbia*, October 1st. Heard from Mrs. Shaw, my nephew Frank's kind friend at Brooklyn: will call there on my way to the ship on the 30th, as I shall have to sleep on board that night, the *Columbia* sailing at 5.30 A.M., October 1st. I went to the Reformed Synagogue, as Mr. Auty was to sing "Comfort Ye." The service is very interesting, and the music good. Dr. Kranskoff, the Rabbi, is a very intelligent and well-educated man. I liked



his sermon very much. Mr. Auty sang fairly well, but the voice is hard from want of regular practice—he has never sung a scale since I came here.

27th. Went to the Methodist Church to hear Dr. Chapman. I was disappointed; he ranted and forced his voice terribly, but I believe he is a really good man. Met the Chambers, Mrs. Parker, etc., there. Settled to go to Washington to-morrow.

28th. Left at 8.15 A.M. for Washington. On nearing Baltimore Harbour I was surprised at the curious motion of the train. I could see nothing, as there were two luggage trains, one on each side of ours, and was told we were crossing on a ferry-boat. The train slid on and off the boat most easily; one could not have supposed there was any change. It was a most perfect day, and the Capitol looked grand, sitting throned on the hilly summit, surrounded by lovely trees, and statues and fountains glittering at its foot. The whole town gives one a sense of dignity and airiness combined—the squares are so large, and full of fine trees; the streets are very wide, yet well furnished with numerous trees, planted often in double rows down the avenues and streets. All the public buildings are marvellously well placed, and in the centre of fine green lawns, surrounded by splendid trees. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the white marble or stone set in the centre of

the bright fresh green. I went through the Capitol, seeing the House of Representatives and the Senate House. They have more the look of lecture halls for scientific purposes than for the assembled Senators, and the various rooms used for receptions are small, though handsomely appointed. But I did not see these to advantage, for the curtains, portières, etc., were not yet put up for the coming meetings of Congress, and it looked bare and cheerless. I was much struck by a little fellow about six who was walking with two ladies. They asked if I would walk with them, and in going through the many passages and corridors I missed them, but some time after I came upon them, when the little fellow ran over to meet me, clasped my hand and exclaimed, "I'm so glad I've found you!" and kept by my side, holding my hand as long as I could remain with them. On leaving the Capitol I took a little open carriage they call a "German," with a coloured boy as driver, who told me all about the different buildings, and where all the men of mark lived, such as ex-Secretary Blaine, Staunton, Fraser, etc. I drove past the Smithsonian Institute, a very handsome building, placed most advantageously in a sort of park, beautifully laid out with flowers and grand trees, to the Washington Monument. It took nine minutes to ascend in the lift, or elevator, as

they call them always here, and I found a series of magnificent views from the little dormer windows on the top storey. A perfectly clear day, with that peculiar distinctness in distant objects that always predicts rain, the whole city looked like an ideal of what a city should be—all the public buildings brought out into strong relief by their backgrounds of foliage, and the streets where the people lived, open yet shaded from the hot sun by the avenues of trees planted everywhere. The monument is five hundred and fifty-five feet high, of white marble. After dismissing my little coloured coachman, and receiving from him a hearty wish for my "safe journey back to England," I went in search of food, the worst I have had in America, then to the station. When we reached Baltimore about a quarter to six I had a novel and beautiful view, for as the train crossed the harbour on the ferry-boat I looked back at the lovely sunset, one of the finest I ever saw; and then, looking across the harbour where we should land, there was night already! Dusky light and stars clearly visible over there. It was a curious contrast, and shows how quickly the night comes on here, there being no twilight. Altogether the visit was very successful, and I enjoyed it much.

29th. — Went to see the Academy of Arts

(in Philadelphia), a fine building, and some good pictures there, notably some seascapes, by W. P. Rickards and A. Harrison. One picture of the "Fisherman's Family," by Clifford Grayson, brother of F. Grayson, at whose house I dined in Wayne, Pa., is remarkably good. He is of the naturalistic school evidently, for his children are like "the dwellers by the sea," and not the pretty pink and white darlings so often painted in *genre* pictures. I did not care for the figure paintings otherwise, and the few Old Masters exhibited looked to me like copies, and not good ones. One of the "Vergine," by Francia, was, I think, genuine, but by an earlier master than him. We dined at Boothby's, and Mrs. Brearley was very faint and unwell. A heavy rain came on, and we got home as soon as we could run to the cars. In the afternoon Mr. Chipman very kindly brought his ice-cream machine and made some—most delicious it was!—for us. In the evening Mr. and Mrs. Chambers called to wish me "God-speed." She brought me a nice little book as a souvenir. Mr. Van Gunton, too, came to wish me good-bye. After they left, Mr. Leonard Auty and Mrs. Brearley gave me a leather purse mounted in silver, and Harry Brearley gave me a Philadelphian souvenir spoon with my initials engraved on it.

30th. Got up at 7.30. After breakfast I packed everything, finishing before eleven, when the Express came for the boxes. We lunched at twelve, and at one Mrs. Brearley and her brother went with me to the station, where Harry met us, as he was determined to "see the last" of me. He is such a nice lad, and I do hope I shall see him again. I bade them all good-bye and started, and reached New York at 4.20. Left my small baggage (which I had carried by my hand from Philadelphia) at the Gortland Street Baggage Office, and took cars to Greenpoint, in Brooklyn, six miles from Brooklyn proper. It was past six when I reached Mrs. Shaw's house. She and her husband proved most kind-hearted Lancashire folk, who have lived in Brooklyn over four years. He is one of the managers of some great glass manufactories here—Tillott's, I think. They have one child, a girl of twelve, who plays the piano well for her age; but I am afraid he thinks too easily of the difficulties attached to the musical profession, for he said he had made up his mind she should be a professional, as it was a nice easy life, and one got among such a good style of people, and made such good friends. They made me have tea-supper with them, and then Mr. Shaw most kindly came all the way into New York with me, taking me on board the *Columbia*. We called at the Cunard

Wharf for my deck-chair, but I could not get it. The man in whose charge all the chairs were had left at eight, and would not be back till eight next morning, so I had to leave it there. A deck-chair is a most desirable addition to luggage. There are never too many on deck, and some folks are so very inconsiderate. The *Columbia* is essentially a German ship—officers, stewards, stewardesses, all are German, and the food is much more so than English. For those who like the culinary art as practised in Germany the table is admirable. The saloon, music-room, and ladies' cabin are all elaborately decorated. The state-room I had was very comfortable; it is always an economy to pay for the best berths in a ship. I was on the saloon deck, No. 19. It is curious that in taking my passage for New York from Liverpool on the *Servia* my state-room was No. 9; when transferred to the *Gallia* in consequence of the *Servia* having met with an accident, I found my state-room was still numbered 9; and in starting for my most successful little tour the date was altered from the 10th September to the 9th; so I may still believe in my "lucky number." I am afraid we shall have bad weather—it is gathering up very cloudy, and the wind is rather high.

*October 1st.* A lovely morning, the sea quite calm, and I walked about the deck for a long time.

Made acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Eglesfield Griffith, very nice people. Later on Mrs. Ashe spoke to me. She is going to Florence to study singing; she will sing to me to-morrow. Exceedingly cold at night.

*2nd.* A perfect day, much warmer than yesterday. Mrs. M. Hunt and Miss M. Hall introduced themselves to me. The vessel has rolled "some" to-day, and the "fiddles" were on the tables at dinner. A good-looking young fellow next to me is going to Berlin to study there the violin under Joachim; Frank M. Griffin is his name. I wished him to play, but his violin, a valuable one, made by Giovanni di Salla, is carefully packed up so that not a breath of sea air should reach it, and he could not venture to unpack it. We talked of art, and he owned that Americans generally were not much given to perseverance or practising. I told him he must work *both* if he wanted to do anything worth hearing in music. Mrs. H. Ashe sang to me this morning; not a bad voice, but I hope she will study the grand art of voice production, without which the singing of songs is of no effect whatever. As I have said, the food on the Cunard boats suits me best. I like not German sausages and things done up with vinegar, and salted fearfully. A really good thing is the ice-cream, a supply of which was brought from New York, and

will last the return voyage. Everything is done in style, and the dinner served in courses, but I prefer the other line's cooking. The piano, a Steinway grand, is not bad, but the touch is worn out. A young fellow—I think Mr. W. E. Hardt—plays a good deal, but in a very unsatisfactory way, playing bits of Wagner, and improvising in a sad, “ragged” style.

3rd. Mr. Frank Griffin tells me his father is professor in a college, and he himself has played in orchestras since he was fourteen. More wind, and the barometer is descending, which looks like bad weather. Have passed four hundred and thirty-six miles to-day. A small ship went past us to-day; she came very near, but did not hail us, nor did we take any notice. It seemed so unfriendly to pass each other by in that wild waste of water without a single hail!

*Sunday, 4th.* No service. The band which plays every day, and at dinner too, gave us some chorales at seven in the morning. I wished it had been at eight o'clock, for it was rough all night, and I did not sleep at all soundly. It has blown half a gale this morning, and the “fiddles” are on for every meal; everything on the table shifts from side to side as the vessel rolls backward and forward. To my surprise I have not felt the least sick, and eat wonderfully well. We passed the *City*



of *Paris* vessel going to New York, and they say her decks were half-seas over, not a passenger to be seen. We have the wind and tide in our favour, so are more fortunate, as the *Columbia* sails well and sweeps over the waves very easily. Made four hundred and forty-six miles to-day.

5th. Very rough last night, and I slept badly. Rather rough and cold all day, almost impossible to walk on deck, it rolled so. Wish I were home; it is so cold, and no fires. Four hundred and twenty-one miles passed. At dinner a plate of soup streamed right into my lap, in spite of the "fiddles"; everything slid about in a most alarming fashion—teacups and saucers rolled at my feet as I entered the saloon, and knives and forks clattered the whole time.

6th. Last night there was a terrible wind on, quite a hurricane I hear; carried away part of the railing, and four men were hurt on deck. It has been very rough all day, but it is glorious to see the waves. From the bow of the vessel one can see the enormous waves rise up as though they seemed likely to engulf her, and just as they seemed about to fall the ship would smoothly glide over them. Of course if we were meeting the wind it would be fearful. A passenger told me the waves were at least thirty to forty feet high. There were perfect hills and valleys through which we slid with

the greatest ease apparently, the ship only rolling from side to side with a long, even roll, not at all disagreeable, only it made walking most difficult. Every now and then the roll lifted the screw out of the sea, then a horrible shuddering seemed to seize the ship, which was most unpleasant—one's backbone quivered in sympathy. When I woke this morning, about five, I found the port-hole had not been firmly screwed in last night, and all my clothes were more or less soaked. I slept till the first gong for breakfast sounded, then I rang for hot water. Mrs. Bertuch, the stewardess, came in saying, "Dere is de hot water, see! You not hear me come in, you was asleep so tight." Another passenger tells me he has made thirty-nine voyages to New York and back, and never had such a rough sea before. Anything so awful as the waves at the bow and stern I never saw before,—always threatening to overwhelm the steamer, while she calmly slid through or over them, despite their seemingly irresistible force and immense height. It is warmer to-day, and the same gentleman who spoke of his thirty-nine voyages told me he felt sure we should get through this bad weather to-night, and it is certainly lulling. We hope to be in Southampton Water by eight on Thursday morning. I ought to have played to-night, but as the piano lid tumbled down on my hand on Monday night through the

ship's rolling, it has been very painful and I cannot play.

7th. After a smoother night, broken by a squall about 3 A.M., we had a lovely day, sunny and warmer, the sea smoother, though we had two or three pretty good seas on occasionally. We passed a sailing-vessel on our starboard to-day, and saw many seagulls, so we are getting near land again. In the evening we stayed on deck as long as we could, and about 9.30 saw the lighthouse on one of the Scilly Islands. By 10 o'clock we were passing the light, a revolving one, showing white, red, and green lights alternately; then we could see other lights on the same islands. After packing up all I could I went to bed.

8th. Could not sleep all night for scouring of decks, etc.; every one seemed up and busy. Was up at 6.30 (breakfast at 7) to see the lovely line of country on the mainland—Bournemouth, etc., and then the Isle of Wight on our right, which looked so fresh and soft in outline. In the varying lights and shades of a cloudy but sunny day they looked very beautiful; it was so nice, too, to see the dear old place again. At 9.45 A.M. we arrived at Southampton, where, in an open kind of shed, we waited for our luggage to come from the ship, and when it was glanced at by the Custom House officers—*mine* at least was only looked at and chalked

at once. Looking out for a railway-carriage, Mr. Griffith came in search of me, and I went with him and his wife up to dear old London. They were much charmed by the pretty scenery we passed through, and I was glad of the sunshine, it makes such a difference. I wired home the time I should arrive, and got there after being nearly capsized in Hampstead Road! The poor horse had the "staggers," and after rearing his head very oddly several times began to tremble all over and slipped almost on his haunches. They took him out of the shafts, when the poor beast fell down. After throwing cold water over his head and letting him lie still for a time, he was apparently all right, and at last I got home—home! How glad I was to be there I need not say, in spite of my most enjoyable visit; and so ends my American Diary, in which I hope it will be found that the pleasant outweighs the unpleasant recollections.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ODDLY enough, I find that I must write another chapter, for many ideas of famous writers and of dear friends make me feel that I must speak of them all. I happen to remember suddenly of the fascinating cleverness of Charles Dickens when he was alive. I shall tell some news which I think will interest readers of that most descriptive writer and fine reciter, whose voice was wonderfully captivating.

In thinking of the brilliant novelist Charles Dickens, I remember what a delightful evening I enjoyed at St. James's Hall, when the splendid reading of his charming Christmas story, *The Chimes*, by the celebrated writer, gave such amusement to everybody. Charles Dickens's voice was very interesting, and so full of sentiment. I felt he must, too, be a great actor, as even the expression of his face was most fine, and the tones of his voice in the different characters of the story were so wonderfully changed (according to the real character of each different member of the book)

that I always felt most anxious to hear him give more readings. Fortunately, I had the great pleasure of going several times to hear him read, or rather speak, his own clever works. One night I heard him read part of *Pickwick*, and this was very funny. I regretted that I had no chance of seeing him play on the stage, for I heard such good accounts of his capital acting.

When I constantly think of my wish to see Arabella Goddard, it reminds me of the pleasure I used to feel very many years ago in hearing her play the piano so charmingly. I remember hearing this celebrated pianiste when she was quite young. It was, I think, at the Promenade Concerts at Drury Lane, long before I myself thought of singing in public; but after I did sing I used often to meet her at concerts where we were both engaged, and I must say it was always a great charm to me. On June 1st, 1859, I gave my first concert at St. Martin's Hall, and I wrote to Miss Arabella Goddard begging her to come and play, and she, with Messrs. Maycock, A. Nicholson, Hausser, and Harper, played Beethoven's Quintet for wind instruments and pianoforte; and in the second part Miss Goddard rendered a solo composed expressly for her by Jules Benedict, called "Erin," and it was very much applauded. I remember her first appearance after her childhood.

This was at the National Concerts at Her Majesty's Theatre, in 1850, before she was fourteen years old. She wrote me a short account of it while I was staying at Folkestone. This really fine pianoforte player married in 1860 J. W. Davison, the clever musical writer in *The Times*, who wrote some elegant songs. One of these, "Swifter far than Summer's Flight," the first of six songs, with words by Shelley, I often sang at concerts.

In 1871 Madame A. Goddard Davison left England for a tour in America, Australia, and India, and I heard some time after that the poor pianiste had a very bad time in one of the vessels during the journey. She was compelled to abandon it and go in a small boat, which discomfort and fright led to a long illness. Returning to London in 1876, she reappeared at St. James's Hall, October 12th and 19th that year. I remember it was in the autumn of 1852 that she first played at the National Concerts given at Her Majesty's Theatre, and the conductor was Michael William Balfe. Arabella was thirteen and a half years old. I used to see her so often, and heard her play so charmingly about that time, that it interested me greatly to find so much talent in one so young. The very early photograph now reproduced of this fine public performer gives a good likeness of her when she was quite young;





MISS ARABELLA GODDARD.

but I have just received from her a splendid likeness, and I have had it placed in a pretty



frame, so that it shall be seen by all my friends when they come to my house.

Actually as recently as May 20th, 1904, I must tell my dear old friends of the two concerts I have sung at. Last week, May 11th, I sang at the Gordon Boys' Home, a short distance from Woking, and my two songs, "Quando a te lieta," by Gounod, and "When I was young," by H. F. Chorley, were immensely applauded and greatly liked. I also sang the lovely duet from *Il Trovatore*, "Si, la stanchezza," with a very nice tenor, Mr. George H. Dawson, who sings so charmingly that I hope he will assist me at many of the charity concerts I have promised to sing at.

The concert on May 18th was at Tunbridge Wells, at the Opera House there, at three o'clock, and I sang "Il tempo passato," by Gordigiani, and my favourite old song, "When I was young," already alluded to, both of which were tremendously applauded. I was compelled each time to return to the stage and bow ever so many times to the audience. I still have to sing several times more this year!

On March 22nd, 1904, I read in the *Daily Telegraph* the following interesting account of the death of my clever friend Charles Durand, who died March 16th:—

## "MR. CHARLES DURAND.

"By the sad death of Mr. Charles Durand, the famous baritone and manager, who expired from an attack of syncope at Holloway on Friday, the operatic stage loses a popular favourite—a veritable father of English opera, who laboured consistently to uphold that form of artistic entertainment at a time when it stood in imminent danger of extinction. Long before the late Carl Rosa had arisen, Mr. Durand had made his own name familiar and respected in every important town of the United Kingdom. He had been an associate of the famous Pyne and Harrison combination in London; he had sung both at Covent Garden and Drury Lane. But it was with the great theatres of the country that Mr. Durand's reputation was chiefly identified, and many of his impersonations remain a fragrant memory to this day. The terrible wear and tear of English opera touring in the 'sixties is but faintly appreciated by the musical public of this age. A principal had no 'off-nights.' He was in the bill every evening. Take a sample fortnight of Mr. Durand's labours—a sample which held good for several consecutive months of the year. On successive nights he appeared as Count Arnheim in *The Bohemian Girl*; the Count di Luna, *Il Trovatore*; Mephistopheles; Don Jose, *Maritana*; Henry Ashton, *Lucia di Lammermoor*; Lord Allcash, *Fra Diavolo*; Rhineberg, *Lurline*; Dr. Dulcamara in Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*; Count Rodolpho, *La Sonnambula*; Plunkett, *Martha*; Don Pedro, *The Rose of Castille*; and Don Giovanni.

"It was under the management of Mr. Durand in 1866 that provincial audiences obtained the earliest opportunity of becoming acquainted with Gounod's *Faust*. The great opera, when originally produced in London, did not achieve that instant success which its permanency in every operatic

répertoire now would seem to imply. Various devices were resorted to in order to stimulate the booking, and concerning these the late Signor Arditì had many amusing stories to tell. In *Mephistopheles* Mr. Durand secured to himself a character by which he will be always famous, although his Figaro, in *The Barber of Seville*, ran it close for popularity. The musical director of his company at that time was the late Herr Meyer Lutz, afterwards a pillar of strength to the Gaiety. During the forthcoming season at Covent Garden we are promised a revival of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, a work done into English by Mr. Durand in 1866, with Mr. Parkinson as Prince Riccardo, Miss Blanche Cole as the Page, and the deceased vocalist as the Prince's secretary, Madame Florence Lancia being the Adelina. Another notable production of his was Meyerbeer's last grand opera, *L'Africaine*, in which Mr. Durand undertook the character of Nelasko, Vasco di Gama's faithful slave. It is many years since Mr. Durand's name was prominently before the public, but although he had reached his seventy-seventh year, his many successes and life of industry in the cause of English opera will not be forgotten. His fine presence always 'filled' the stage, and his voice seemed impervious to the continued strain put upon it."

Years ago I had the pleasure of finding myself in an exceptionally happy family circle—that of a Mr. and Mrs. Watson and their two young daughters, Janie and Rosalie. I recollect that Mr. Watson's water-colour paintings interested me greatly. They consisted mainly of views of lovely parts of rural England. As Rosalie Watson grew older she evinced great capacity for painting

really excellent water-colour portraits of friends. After some years she was fated to share for life the artistic fortunes of another artist—Mr. Alfred E. Emslie, who, as is well known, paints beautiful pictures, and several of his works have been exhibited in the Royal Academy. His “Christ



ALFRED E. EMSLIE.

Photo by Bogardus.

blessing Little Children,” and “Crompton Inventing Spinning,” were much admired.

Other important pictures by the same artist were “The Awakening” and a companion picture, “Passing the Eternity,” exhibited at the Fine Art Society. Mr. Emslie also painted a series of nine large pictures, entitled “God is Love,”

which were exhibited

at the Egyptian Hall. Mr. Emslie’s portraits were very good, and in one year he exhibited forty-two, seven portraits finding their way to the Royal Academy. Dr. James Martineau’s picture was a wonderfully good likeness, as was also the portrait of Sir Walter Besant. I have a lovely little picture of Emslie’s painting in my

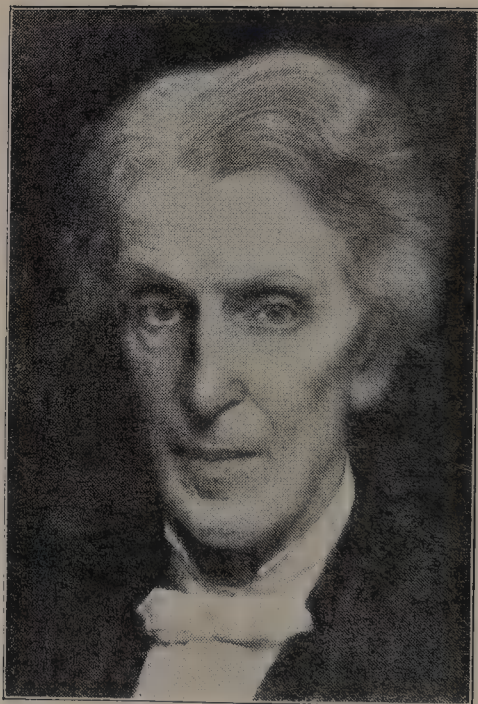


MRS. A. E. EMSLIE AND HER BABY.

Photo by Gabell & Co.



drawing-room, "Three Fishers went Sailing," which all admirers of painting have greatly liked. Mrs. Rosalie M. Emslie continues to paint in miniatures, and every year specimens of her work may be seen in the Royal Academy, the Royal



DR. JAMES MARTINEAU.

Photo by Henry Dixon & Son, London.

Society of Painters in Piccadilly, and elsewhere. Mrs. Emslie's tiny children are invariably charming and effective. Among my treasured pictures are two clever views at Norwich, one of the river Yare and one of a very old house and garden, painted by Mr.

Bosworth Harcourt, who also wrote a very interesting book respecting the *Theatre Royal, Norwich: The Chronicles of an Old Playhouse*. In his book Mr. Harcourt kindly referred to me in the following terms:—"We believe" that

Miss Palmer's long connection with the musical and dramatic world has been chronicled by that lady, and may ere long be given to the public, which will doubtless prove most interesting reading."

Mr. Harcourt also gave a very good notice in his book of my singing in operas at the Theatre Royal, Norwich, some years ago.





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